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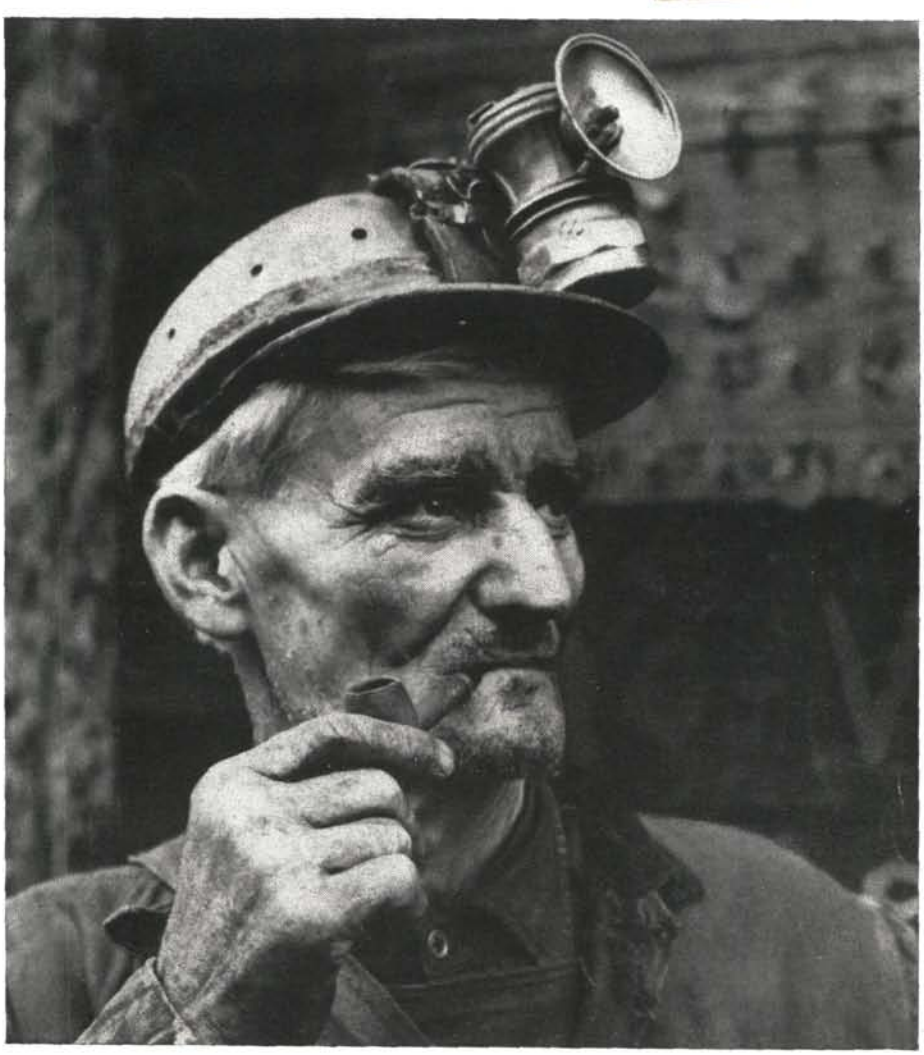

"Miners are haunted men." *(See page 11)*

Machine-Age Art
By LYMAN BRYSON

Willa Cather (1876-1947)
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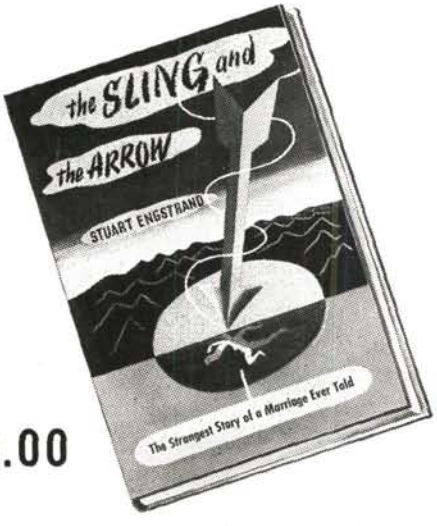

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, published weekly by the Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y. Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Norman Cousins, Vice President; Amy Loveman, Secretary; Lillian Grannon, Assistant Treasurer; Bert Garmise, Circulation Director; Arthur Bodenheimer, Assistant Circulation Director. Subscriptions $6 a year; $7 in Canada. Member of Audit Bureau of Circulations. Printed in U. S. Vol. XXX, No. 19, May 10, 1947. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature." Entire issue, Copyright, 1947, by Saturday Review Associates, Inc. Registered United States Patent Office.

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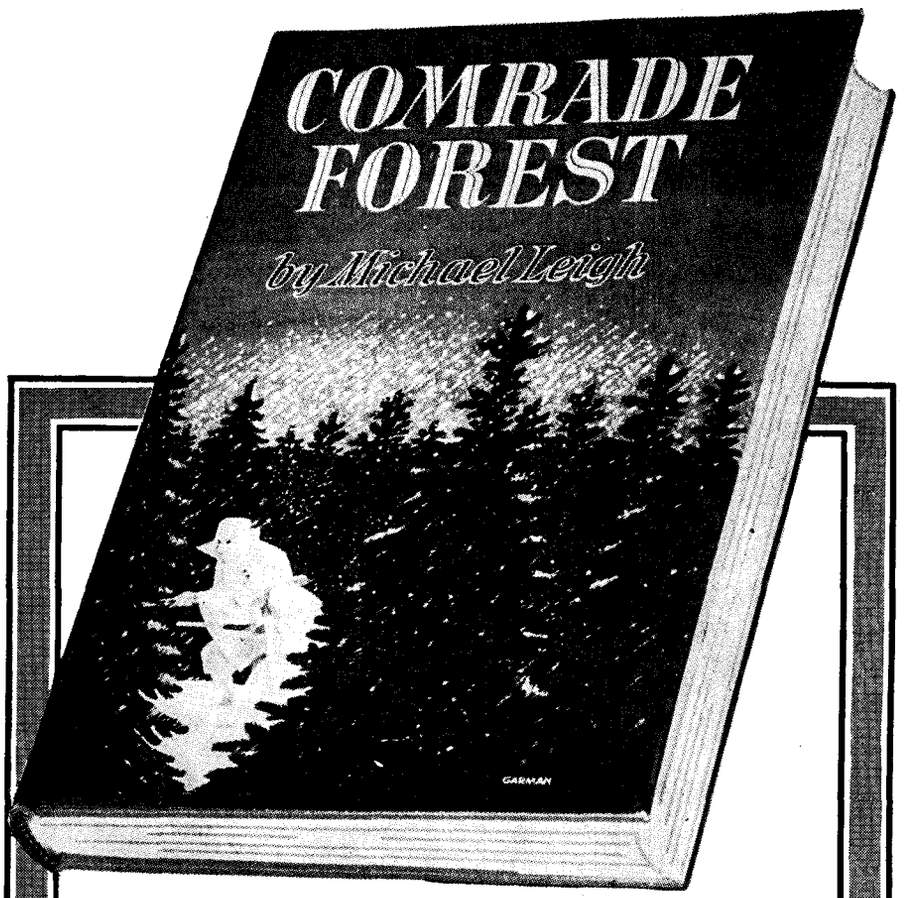
A stirring novel of "General Winter's" guerrilla ally



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"There is so much here that is real, lasting and true."

—JOHN WOODBURN, *Saturday Review*

BOOKSELLERS tell us these days of a jaded appetite among their fiction customers because, they say, so many novels are none too different from each other in approach, plot, or idea. "Formula," they complain. And of course they name exceptions. They tell us that the reason THE LEFT HAND IS THE DREAMER by Nancy Wilson Ross has been selling is that it has a peculiar and essential difference — in theme, thought, and style — from any modern novel published in a long time. Paradoxically, the theme concerns average people and average problems. But it is the complete honesty and new insight into those problems which has made this novel an intimate personal experience for its readers. It is the story of Fredericka Perry, and of a marriage problem that is like thousands of marriage problems in America. And yet it is not the familiar triangle of a new love versus an old love that is important. The essence of the book is what a new awareness, if it comes to a human being out of deep anguish, can do to relate the individual more closely to the real life of the modern world. The extraordinary reception, both critical and popular, that THE LEFT HAND IS THE DREAMER has earned, is public proof of the private opinion expressed in many letters from readers who have said about Nancy Ross's novel: "This book has done something for me." This, we submit, is the ultimate gift of the world of books, "the real, lasting and true,"—the message that is different because it now seems so rare.

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"A considerable achievement . . . There is much good talk in these pages, stimulating, intelligent, widely informed."—*Orville Prescott,* N. Y. TIMES

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TRADE Winds

MY WIFE, PHYLLIS, and I have a lot of very good friends in Hollywood, and all of them were wonderful to us there, but I certainly do not propose to bore you with the details of our goings-on. A few highlights should suffice.

There was my "screen test" at MGM, arranged through the good offices of Arthur Hornblow and George Sidney, Jr. Some day there may be a couple of shorts made to show the inner workings of the publishing business—how a book is contracted for, manufactured, and, in happy instances, promoted to best-sellerdom, and the thought prompting my test was that I might be the narrator in such a project. The story of this unimportant, if personally exciting, event was magnified by the time it reached New York, and my associates at Random House in particular were decidedly not amused. When Harry Cohn, of Columbia Pictures (known as "The Word"), heard about the test, he snorted, "MGM isn't going to put anything over on me. I'm sending for both Simon *and* Schuster!" . . . Mr. Hornblow reminisced happily about his days as editor of the wonderful old *Stage* magazine, and his early interviews for *Photoplay*, done so tentatively that he hid under the pseudonym of "Joseph Vestibule." The girl he profiled first was a thrilled young beauty who confessed that she never had been interviewed before. Her name was Norma Talmadge. Today, Hornblow is top producer at MGM, husband of the budding novelist Leonora Morris, and so recognized a gourmet that no one dares even present a script to him unless it is the same temperature as his office. At the moment he is producing "The Hucksters" and "Cass Timberlane." MGM, like most other major studios, is turning more and more to the world of books as source for its top product. . . .

THE DAY I LUNCHED at Twentieth Century-Fox, a fellow guest was Mr. Charles Skouras. He rose to say a few words to the assemblage, which included his brother Spyros, Darryl Zanuck, Bill Perlberg, Harry Brand, Ernst Lubitsch, Otto Preminger, Gene Markey, and a half dozen other major executives of the studio. "Gentlemen," he remarked amiably, "it is a pleasure to see all the brains, all the brilliant producing genius of the company at one table. I thought you might like to know that the popcorn concession at our theatres last year netted a profit of five million dollars. I believe, gentlemen, that that is a hell of a lot more than you and all your famous writers put together made for the company in the same period." Mr. Skouras being a Very Important Person, the assembled producing genius laughed uproariously. "What a kidder he is," chuckled Harry Brand. . . . Another guest was a Mexican theatre magnate, who explained that Mexico City is built on the site of a dried-up lake, with the result that the whole metropolis is sinking about five inches a year. The biggest buildings are erected on caissons that are sunk deep into the lake bed, and they remain stationary, but smaller construction jobs are set on floating caissons that sink with the city. Since the biggest picture palace in Mexico City is built on the former basis, and the lobby leading to it on the latter, the speaker explained that his problem was unique. Nobody could deny this assertion, so the talk reverted to popcorn concessions. . . .

DARRYL ZANUCK, one of the most daring and resourceful men in Hollywood, promised that both the forthcoming "Snake Pit" and "Gentleman's Agreement" would be faithful adaptations, with no punches pulled. The Hobson story is one of four on the explosive subject of anti-Semitism at present engaging the attention of the best talent in Hollywood. Sam Goldwyn will do "Earth and High Heaven"; Adrian Scott has "The Brick Foxhole" already in production for RKO; MGM plans an all-out job for Sholem Asch's "East River." (One wit suggested changing the name to "Shuel in the Sun"). . . . It is encouraging to see Hollywood come to grips with a problem of this dimension. A few really good pictures on the subject can accomplish more than a thousand articles and editorials. . . .

THE MOST RESTFUL day I spent in Southern California was at the beach house of Anatole Litvak, listening to his plans for filming Kessel's "Sirocco" with Cary Grant, while the waves of the Pacific rolled up to our door. The most exciting new stars I met were Deborah Kerr and Lilli Palmer. The greatest film I saw was one that unfortunately will never be exhibited publicly. It was a compilation of all the song-and-dance numbers done by Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire from "Dancing Down to Rio" to "The Story of Vernon and Irene Castle." It ran for three solid hours and was a delight from start to finish. And what memories such numbers as "Cheek to Cheek," "Continental," "All My Eggs in One Basket," and "You Can't Take That Away from Me" evoked! There are only two prints of this film in existence: Fred Astaire has one, and Ginger has the other. There are too many rights involved to permit a general release. . . . After this picture was shown, I made a dive for Ginger's famous soda fountain, and made myself a beautiful black and white that unfortunately overflowed onto Mr. William Powell's new dress suit. Ginger decided to serve the other guests herself. . . .

THE GREATEST excitement in Hollywood today is centered in two studios: RKO and the new Universal-International. RKO is now under the domination of the dynamic Dore Schary; everybody expects great things of him. Bill Fadiman has just joined up there too. . . . At Universal, in the space of thirty minutes, I encountered Bill Goetz, Nunnally Johnson, Charles MacArthur, Walter Wanger, and Ray Crossett—and saw

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"From where I sit"

YOU, right here and right now have a piece of something in your hands called very simply and very frighteningly, destiny. If you want to know what I'm talking about, read the rest of this column.

It was a lot of inconvenience for everyone in New York to line up and roll up his sleeve and be vaccinated against smallpox. But up to this writing, several million have managed to do it.

They did it because in a sense, they know that they are stockholders in that commodity called life.

The book I'm urging you to buy is **Conqueror's Peace: A Report to the American Stockholders** (and that means you) by two ex-G.I.'s. BUD HUTTON and ANDY ROONEY. These two have covered Europe as soldiers and as civilians. They have seen the war and they have seen what we call the peace. They feel that they have a big stake in the future of this world of ours, even if it is only their own lives that secretly concern them most.

In this book, they report to you the stockholders on that peace which we are going to have to work for now and in the years to come. They are Americans expressing their views on both the glory and the bungling in Europe. Americans are proud of being among other things, good businessmen. It's good business to check on your stock in humanity and peace and the future. And you couldn't do it more painlessly than by buying this strangely thrilling book.

paul

DOUBLEDAY 50th Anniversary

the bungalows where a dozen equally famous writers and producers were now located. A top writer, who makes no secret of his leftist sympathies, was moaning bitterly to Nunnally Johnson about his battles with Tallulah Bankhead. Nunnally chuckled sympathetically for ten full minutes, then interrupted, "Oh, come now. You know you wouldn't say half these things about Tallulah if she was a Russian!" . . .

AT WARNER BROTHERS, I found Jerry Wald mulling over a picture Charles Jackson had contracted to write for him, and Milton Sperling conferring with Niven Busch, whose "Duel in the Sun" is reaching astronomical figures in the twenty-five-cent edition. . . . In other parts of town, Quentin Reynolds is writing a screenplay called "Northside 777"; Moss Hart is scripting "Gentleman's Agreement"; Albert Maltz is working on a new novel for Little, Brown and ably presiding over the Hollywood chapter of the Author's League; Aldous Huxley, still avoiding eyeglasses, hopes to have a novel for the spring 1948 season. . . . What is happening to the run-of-the-mill writers who expected to make a quick fortune in Hollywood? One of the picture industry's top executives summarized their plight so neatly that I mean to quote him at length in next week's Trade Winds. I will also wind up this series of travelogues with the story of my visit to San Francisco. . . .

THE LATEST REMARKS attributed to Hollywood's most famous dialecticians are "If F. D. R. was alive, he'd turn in his grave"; "Those Indians are straight off a reservoir"; "She's nothing but a gangster's mole"; and "Send the check to my house; care of me." . . . A Knopf salesman told me, "You know our slogan this year is 'Knopf has the novels for 1947.' I guess it's up to the sales force to see he hasn't still got them for 1948!" Alfred's brother Edwin is finishing a new play before he produces "B. F.'s Daughter" for MGM; Mildred Knopf is writing a cook book that will be published by Borzoi under the intriguing title of "Home on the Range." . . .

BABES IN THE Hollywoods these days do not consider their homes complete without a couple of paintings by Dufy and Utrillo, though I suspect that a few of the Utrillos I saw grew in Brooklyn. . . . The two most familiar sounds in Beverly Hills are the clicking of typewriter keys and the echoing slaps of masseuses' palms on beautiful derrieres. . . . The California young have abandoned the word "corny" in favor of "chintzy." There's nothing like keeping your vocabulary up to date! . . .

A unique institution in Hollywood is Schwab's Drug Store, on Sunset Boulevard, where stars, writers, and also-rans sip their coffee and replace current magazines on the sales rack after reading them thoroughly. Besides maintaining the best drug section in the city, the four Schwab Brothers have built up a huge business in liquor, perfumes, and cosmetics. "They say it's our location," laughed Jack Schwab, "but a drug store right across the street went broke in six months." Chief Pharmacist Louis Berardi probably knows more intimate details of the stars' ailments than all the doctors in town. In the very middle of his stock of pills, medicines, and ointments, is one drawer marked "Sidney Skolsky, Private." This, in effect, is Skolsky's entire office. People bring their scoops and publicity notes to him here. He has done for Schwab's what Winchell did for the Stork Club. . . .

TED LAWSON, co-author of "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo," told me a fine story about Alex de Seversky, who, like Lawson, lost a leg as a flyer in wartime. Seversky one day was trying to cheer a disconsolate aviator in a similar predicament. "The loss of a leg," he said with conviction, "is really not so great a calamity. Look at me. I dance, I fly, I drive a car, I go everywhere. Women were more interested in me the moment they discovered I had one artificial limb. And another thing: if you get hit on a wooden leg, it doesn't hurt a bit! Here, try it!" The soldier took his cane and cracked it across Seversky's leg with terrific force. "You see," laughed Seversky. "If you hit an ordinary man like that, he'd be in bed for five days! Cheer up, old man." He waved airily, and left the ward. In the corridor, he collapsed. The wounded aviator, of course, had hit him on his real leg. BENNETT CERF.

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HAVE YOU DISCOVERED
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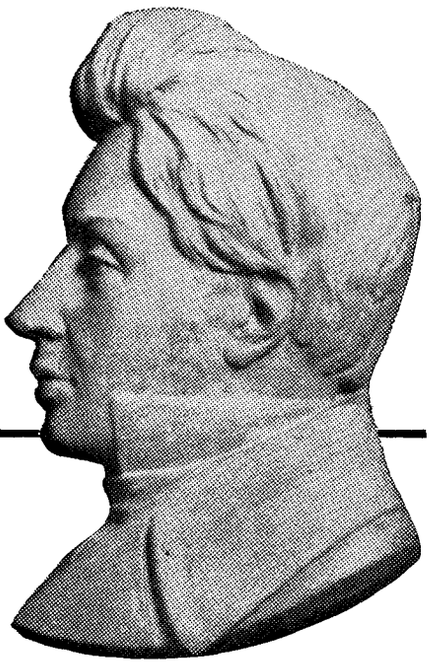

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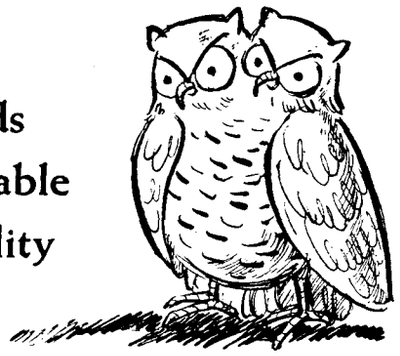
Towards a dependable abnormality



AN ATOMIC SCIENTIST, age nine, would be news. It seems unlikely, but there are still certain prodigious children who can make us blush at the now tranquil memory of that last mark in Intermediate Algebra. Perhaps the prodigy always flourishes, but in the days of our fairly normal and uninspired childhood we used to feel bitter hatred toward little boys who practiced the violin for twenty-six hours a day. We didn't care to meet children who explained Einstein before breakfast, although we should have been interested in one with two heads or six toes.

Aging up into the teens, we tried a small reconciliation with the idea of genius and took pleasure in stories of ex-prodigies who devoted their lives to collecting street-car transfers. But it has been only in the past decade that we have given real consideration to the effect an extraordinary child can have on the adults around it. These children in literature tend to drift away from the usually accepted meaning of the word prodigy, and one very striking example of the effect an unusual child can have on adults is the chief business of Lillian Hellman's play, THE CHILDREN'S HOUR. Another more recent one is that of the little Nazi boy in Arnaud D'Usseau's and James Gow's TOMORROW THE WORLD. A third is in René Fülöp-Miller's recently published novel, SING, BRAT, SING.

This is the story of a precocious and malicious brat, four-year-old Kiki Maladin, who lived with her seamstress mother, senile grandmother, a sister, and their unpaid servant girl in a Viennese tenement. But Kiki could sing Lakmé at the age of four, and things got to be different. From the time of her discovery by an impresario, she became a power and a terror to every adult within bossing distance. Her fantastic ability to mimic the sounds produced by an aging opera singer who lived in the same tenement, and whom Kiki had been in the habit of mocking with merciless precision, made her child-wonde of the Continent. The old singer was engaged as tutor, and Kiki mocked her through the great opera houses of all Europe.

The bitter humor in this spectacle of a woman, who has all her life labored to become a great singer, spending her last, untriumphant years being mocked by a child, is part of Mr. Fülöp-Miller's carefully constructed plot, as are the fantastic and brilliant tours, which have their own special brand of horror. For this was a singular case of baby making enough money to buy the whole family a new pair of shoes, and when baby said "Play!" people played; they turned over the chairs in hotel rooms and crawled under them; they tooted horns and beat on drums and played like dolls in order to live in luxury and smoke imported cigars. If they did not play, Kiki did not sing.

Among brat-children of fiction, Kiki is something very special indeed; a kind of alter-ego for Shirley Temple. She was too young to be reasoned with, and too essentially cussed to be a "good" girl unless her whims were gratified immediately. For the brief time of her supremacy she wielded as much absolute power over those who profited from her career as any dictator, and apparently found her own perverted, four-year-old happiness. But it is with the adults who exploited her that Fülöp-Miller is most concerned; members of the family and hangers-on who were willing to do anything for the things that money will buy. It is against them that he employs his fine irony. For Kiki is merely the spring which sets a man's greed in action against his self-respect, and it requires a writer with the insight and background of Fülöp-Miller to develop so strange a tale into a book that has its own life.

The ironical contradictions to be found not only in peaks and valleys, but in the levelled-off places of human behavior have interested Fülöp-Miller throughout his writing career (which is a fascinating story in itself). We like one episode towards the close of his novel especially well, just a few pages in which the impresario who discovered Kiki announces his intention to pull out and manage a giant instead. He agrees with his critics that no giant could possibly be the unique attraction Kiki was. "On the other hand," he says, "an abnormality of that sort has the advantage that it's quite dependable . . . when a giant has grown two inches taller than any other giant in history, even nature cannot renege." And with that statement he turns to a more lucrative field.

In the days of our fairly normal and uninspired childhood, we should have enjoyed this story of a brat with a gusto reserved for those who might like to be malicious but just can't seem to make the grade. But though Kiki may well have spent the rest of her life collecting transfers or sewing up shirts for sweatshop agents the way her mother did, it's no longer very important. What is important is money, and Fülöp-Miller (who ran away from home at fourteen to write a great work and starve in Vienna) has written a corking story and a finely ironical novel about what it can do.

Sing, Brat, Sing

By RENÉ FÜLÖP-MILLER

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The Saturday Review of Literature

Machine-Age Art

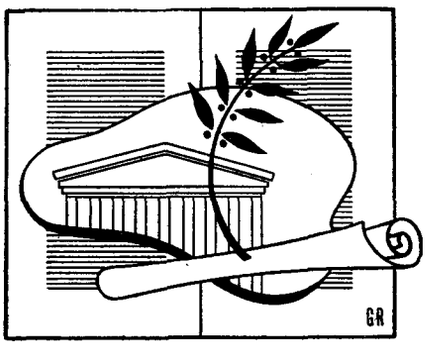
LYMAN BRYSON

WHEN modern critics talk about "popular" art it is often difficult to discover precisely what they are talking about. They show signs of obscure trouble because the ghost of Plato and the ghost of Aristotle stand at their elbows and give them shadowy bad advice. It is out of the ancient tradition that we have derived our canons of judgment and we try to apply them today without much concern for the changes made by modern conditions. Technological change has drastically affected all forms of art. Plato and Aristotle would have been interested in these changes; they could not prophesy them.

By popular art, I mean something different from what has been talked about in the books on esthetics. It is an element in our culture of considerable importance, and not to be dismissed, I think, because it happens not to be the sort of thing that critics have been trained to admire. We can begin by distinguishing the popular from the other kinds. I would suggest that there are three categories of which popular art is one. The other two are fine art and folk art.

The definitions are for working purposes and cannot claim to satisfy everybody. But let fine art be the name we give to the art in which the creator conveys emotion by means of design. He will do other things also, of course, but that is his purely esthetic purpose, the creation of "beauty." The secondary and sociological characteristics of this kind will include these: That the creator will concede little to his audience, expecting appreciation to come to him. That his patterns whether in color, form, sound, plot, character, or any other element of design will be his own invention. That authorship generally will be single and claimed as an honor. That the artist's purpose will be primarily in creation itself.

By folk art, for our purposes here, we mean the kind of creative activity that develops in local, partly self-



conscious cultures. The patterns are conventional; variation is slight. Authorship may be impersonal. The skills called for are common, although their high development is necessarily rare. The purposes are ritualistic, as in altar embroideries; social, as in improvised ballads; utilitarian, as in pots.

By popular art we mean creative work that measures success by the size of its audience and the profit it brings to its makers. The patterns are likely to be conventional, although they use varying content and escape routine. Authorship is notorious and is kept as public as possible for the sake of gain. The skills needed may be fairly common, as in folk art, but their high development is rare.

It is not possible to get rid of the problem of popular art by concluding that whatever has neither the beauty of fine art, nor the dignity and human meaning of folk art, must have no value at all. Nor can we escape the problem by saying that popular art is important only in so far as it contains, even by accident, the elements of beauty. The fact remains that great numbers of people in our culture spend hours of their time in consuming these delights.

Sociologically speaking, popular art is a product of the machine age. It could not be possible until we had cheap print and the cinema and broadcasting, each one of these means of mass communication coming along in turn. Their effect was cumulative. They made it possible for millions upon millions to enjoy vicarious living. They cost so much and were produced on such a scale that they had to appeal to huge audiences, which meant that they found low common denominators of interest and taste. Above all, and this was crucially decisive in setting their character, they used up invented material so fast that no possible supply of "artistic" talent could keep up with the demand. What is quickly done is likely to go quickly; popular songs are short-lived, and when they are broadcast they are snow on the desert's face. A new song is always needed and a new story; if possible a new idea, although it almost never is really a new idea.

This voraciousness of the mass media will help to explain in part the qualities of popular art. But this art has another, more important characteristic. In order to get its mass audience, popular art in any medium must always tell a story. It must be fiction. In more technical terms, it must be representational. As far as the evidence goes, we can be quite sure that any art that did not have a large element of explicit representation could not be popular.

SO this kind of art offers the consumer a chance to identify himself with characters in the story. The enjoyment of it is day-dreaming through a plot more logical than a sleepy passive mind could devise. It is day-dreaming with a trusted guide. And a good many limitations on this kind of art are the result of this full representation. Ironies are dangerous if not impossible. What is wanted is a plausible drama in which the consumer can imagine himself taking part, and it must have a plot that does not, in its denouement at least, offend his moral taste.

If, in addition to an explicit and concluded day-dream, the consumer can get some of the elements more properly called "fine," no harm is done. He may even enjoy the broad-

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cast serial, or the movie, or the magazine tale, a little more for the emotion that comes of meeting beauty. There are natural instincts for this kind of happiness, no doubt, in all of us, although they seem not to count for much unless they are trained. I am not speaking now of the insertion of something beautiful into a piece of popular art, as when Iturbi breaks into the pattern of a movie with a few moments of music. That is something different and may be good for other reasons. Nor do I mean to forget that some men who have created successful popular art can also be great artists by the stricter conventional canons. There are examples like Gershwin and Walt Disney and many more. These considerations do not change the principle that the strictly essential elements of popular art (as I am now using the word to describe something real and important and distinguishable in our present culture) lie in its presentation of a tale with a moral by which anyone can get outside himself for a time and expand his experience for his own virtuous self-understanding.

To get back to the difficulty of the critic who tries to judge this phenomenon, peculiar to our times, by canons of another stage in cultural development, we can imagine Plato and Aristotle in a modern movie theatre. We can imagine them, disguised by darkness, watching a vividly photographed and competently acted modern story. It makes little difference what the story is. They would both be wondering what was happening to hundreds of men and women and boys and girls who sat together in that magic darkness seeing themselves do deeds of courage and cleverness, sweeping up rewards of honor and romance. Plato, I think, would be wondering if it was good experience. Aristotle would be wondering if it was good art. Since we judge everything else that we call art by the traditional versions of their attitudes we can at least understand our own judgments on popular art better if we try to guess what they would be thinking and why.

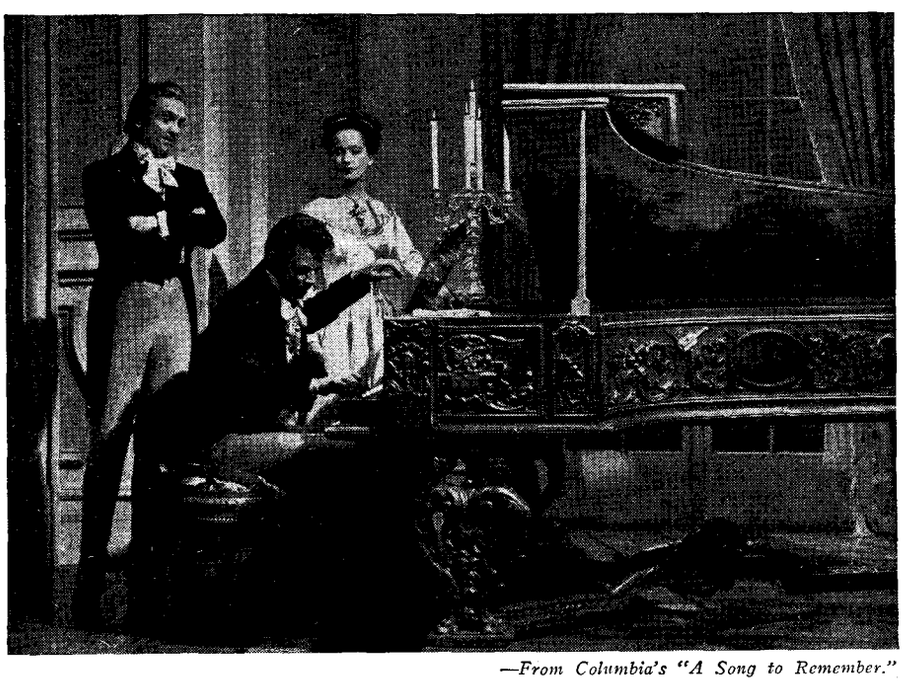
Aristotle apparently believed in an effect he called purgation, and after a good deal of esthetic theorizing it has become evident, I think, that Aristotle did not, in talking about purgation, mean to abandon his essential position that art is for art's sake or for beauty's sake. The truth of his idea of purgation then would lie not in one's imaginary bearing of all the suffering laid upon a tragic hero, but rather in one's much more subtle response to the artist's presentation. This is probably another way of saying that while we respond to great tragedy both emotionally and intellectually, our response is not mere vicarious experience nor sympathy for the pitiable spectacle of a human being in distress; it is response to beauty in the design. Our own emotions and recognitions are possibly part of the design to which we respond. Purgation comes on the esthetic level and not in the grosser and more obvious elements of sympathetic feeling. A great tragedy proves its greatness by the exaltation that lifts us out of ourselves, and out of all ordinary existence, and transcends the suffering we have shared with the protagonist. On the level of vicarious experience alone, no such exaltation seems possible.

SO Aristotle in the movie theatre would be looking for a work of fine art. He would be judging the movie by its logical consistencies, the balance of character elements. He would be seeking something to respond to emotionally, but it would not be the obvious vicissitudes of the heroine. Out of that he would not be getting much purgation. The esthetic elements in the movie are probably pretty thin. There is not much logic. The design is carelessly tied up at the end. The issues are not significant; the action is not of a certain "size." The emotions are those that can be aroused by a quick appeal to the ludicrous or the pathetic. One can be reasonably sure that Aristotle would not consider the laughter and tears of his companions the kind of purgation that makes art a noble experience.

Plato, being an older and sadder and quite possibly a wiser man, is unhappy for a different reason. He takes it for granted that the imaginary life that is enjoyed with tears and laughter by the people around him is precisely the purpose of the whole institution. People have come to the theatre to be absorbed for a time in the affairs of imaginary persons, and they are quite properly letting themselves be swept on by the story. Plato's unhappiness would be because he would, as he listened and looked, pass judgment on all the moral implications of what was happening on the screen. He would look for some profound or noble concept of life's purposes, exemplified and praised and rewarded in the fable, but all that would seldom happen. He would look for examples of high-mindedness and unselfishness and civic understanding, and they would be mostly missing. So Aristotle would be unhappy in a mediocre movie because it was bad art; Plato would be unhappy because it was bad teaching.

There appears to be no other way of judging popular art. The true esthetes, of course, would like to banish all but fine art and folk art. They would allow only masterpieces or unpretentious routine products. They talk and write about getting "back" to a time when popular taste was simple and "sound." By that they mean that they would prefer to have no one ever express an opinion about beauty or the imagination who was not a trained appreciator. The rest of the "folk" could get along with pots and jingles in their own quaint fashion.

(*Continued on page* 31)



—From Columbia's "A Song to Remember."

When Iturbi's playing is dubbed on the sound track while an actor goes through the motions "it might be that Iturbi is doing more for a wider appreciation of music . . . than he would be by giving a concert in Carnegie Hall."

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Where Coal and Blood Are Buried

A MEDICAL SURVEY OF THE BITUMINOUS-COAL INDUSTRY. Report of the Coal Mines Administration. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office. 1947. 310 *pp.* $1.75.

Reviewed by MARK STARR

The Coal Mines Administrator undertakes to have made a comprehensive survey and study of the hospital and medical facilities, medical treatment, sanitary, and housing conditions in the coal mining areas. The purpose of this survey will be to determine the character and scope of improvements which should be made to provide the mine workers of the Nation with medical, housing, and sanitary facilities conforming to recognized American standards.—Section 5 of the Krug-Lewis Agreement, signed May 29, 1946.

THE Navy Medical Corps made that survey and its report is now available. Free from any trace of technical gobbledegook, it skilfully combines arresting photographs of the homes, churches, workplaces, schools, and clinics in mining camps with tables of statistics, together with texts of the agreements and a supplement full of human interest, "The Coal Miner and His Family." There are sections on housing and sanitary facilities, public health, industrial medicine, general medical services, hospitalization, and other important matters. Discussion and practical recommendations follow the summary of the facts in each chapter.

Here is the story of how the miner is born, how he works, plays, and worships, and how he dies, with a mass of valuable detail about his union organization and the company for which he works, about the high death rate and the high output of a mechanized industry. This book, under its pedestrian title, will be not only a standard work of reference for students but a graphic document for all those interested in how 400,000 of our fellow Americans earn their living in the soft-coal industry.

As a sample of the text, here is the introduction by Allan Sherman to the section on the family life of the miner:

> Scattered throughout more than twenty states in the Union, there are people to whom the pick, shovel, and drill are the symbols of livelihood, to whom the tipple of a coal mine is both a monument to bloody strife and a promise of economic security. These are the soft-coal miners of America. Highly individualistic, yet bound together by a common isolation, steeped in tradition but yielding to the forces of mechanical progress, uneducated but as intelligent as the average American, they form a mass of human beings upon whose labors the industrial motion of the nation depends. . . .
>
> Miners are haunted men. Their minds are vexed with the memories of bloody struggles for higher pay and for the preservation and growth of their labor union. Their thoughts are constantly troubled by insecurity of work, for they know that, although the calendar year contains 365 days, they have worked as little as 142, and only nine times out of the last twenty-five years have they averaged more than 200 days a year. Their hearts grow weary repressing the importunate warnings of the dangers that lurk underground which may at any time cut them off from livelihood. Their families silently share these burdens.

—From "The Coal Miner and His Family."

At day's end—a hot tub.

The striking photographs by Russell W. Lee of good and bad conditions above and below ground which enliven almost every page, and the description of the miners' decrepit shacks beside the mine waste dumps, the disease-breeding privies and the contaminated streams of some of our Coalvales would make a script for a radio play, for a socially significant "March of Time" or, preferably, for an epic documentary to rank with Pare Lorentz's "The River." Lorentz described the raping of our forests and surface soil and their reclamation through hydro-electric power. The Navy Medical Corps members tell the story of the ravaging of our coal supplies and the exploitation of flesh and blood in the isolated coal camps and indicate how these resources can be saved.

This report can be criticized only because it was not made at least ten years ago before the bitter struggles in coal aroused the attention of the nation. It should be required reading for all the Congressmen who propose to destroy union welfare funds. This survey shows how badly the miners need their welfare fund. Instead of getting mad over the manners of John L. Lewis, or at best indulging in transient sympathy for the victims of such a disaster as Centralia, all of us might well study this medical survey. The coal industry is the basic provider for other industries and also the industrial problem child in this and other countries. The output of the individual miner has increased with the mechanization of the mines. It stands in 1945 at 5.78 tons per man per day, compared to 2.56 tons in 1890.

In 1932 only fifteen per cent of the total of soft coal was mined under union contract, but in the New Deal decade the miners organized successfully and have used their newly-won strength to lift up their wages. However, as everyone knows who has worked in mines, mechanization greatly increases the strain and the danger for the actual miner and to a large extent his housing and health conditions remain dangerously primitive. Ten per cent of the mines produce more than two-thirds of the total soft coal mined and those companies could provide better living standards. Several states are even without compulsory workmen's compensation and in others the maximum payment is beggarly.

The writers of this report have studied the early books of authors like Arthur E. Suffern, Walter H. Hamilton, and Helen Wright, as well as the more recent "Men and Coal," by McAlister Coleman, to understand what the miners feel about their lot.

Public opinion will back this report if its contents are known and popularized by radio, play, and movie. The presumption of effective democracy is that human beings can be persuaded; the minority can convince the majority if they have the facts on their side. But our powers of persuasion are not yet equal to the quality of the case for improving the miners' lot. The stage army of the Lord is all too small and must operate too quickly. So far the battle sectors of health and housing have not been manned in effective strength. This report is a valuable munition. Its criticisms and constructive recommendations are immediate and practical. Rear Admiral Joel T. Boone, the head of the medical survey group, says that the tolerance of health provisions in some mining communities is a "disgrace to a nation to which the world looks

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for pattern and guidance." He advocates joint responsibility and declares:

> The Report of the Medical Survey of the Bituminous-Coal Industry presents convincing evidence that the serious problem of improving the health of the miner, assuring him of better living conditions, enabling him to provide for his family through his own initiative and efforts, and making him a more responsive and responsible citizen of his community is a solvable problem if Labor, Management, and the medical profession cooperate and work conjointly with a united interest and sincere devotion to a common cause—the good of large numbers of people and a basic industry. Health is a common concern of all groups. Working together for its promotion can help immeasurably to weld the bonds of human interrelationship.

The application of this view, so well supported by this book, can mean that the coal camps can at last be civilized to lighten our conscience and to do justice to the men of the mines.

Mark Starr, ILGWU educational director and ex-miner, was labor consultant to the Supreme Command in Japan last year.

Hark, the Blackpoll Warbler!

SPRING IN WASHINGTON. By Louis J. Halle, Jr. William Sloane Assoc., Inc. New York: 1947. 227 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by
DONALD CULROSS PEATTIE

OF ALL the great cities of America, our national capital is the most truly "natural." As Mr. Halle says, the whole city is one vast arboretum—the most tree-shaded of towns. Nature fills it up: men move, rather small, beneath great trees, and many of the most grandiose monuments of the capital scarcely emerge above the boughs. Even in an apartment there one is likely to wake to the sound of a cardinal, or to see the flash of an oriole going past the kitchen window. The bird life is particularly rich; for the District of Columbia, situated where the tidewater and the piedmont meet, is on one of the greatest flyways of migration in the world. The variety of habitat, too, is ample—marshes, broad rivers, swamp woods, pine woods, hillsides clothed with deciduous trees, and open fields—all to be reached in a few minutes from any part of the town. It is not the least of Washington's charms that it is so easy to get out of it speedily. You can just *walk* out, or bicycle, as Mr. Halle did. No wearying commuters' trains, no ferries or tunnels are needed, nor is the city ringed around with a great factory zone or an endless suburban belt.

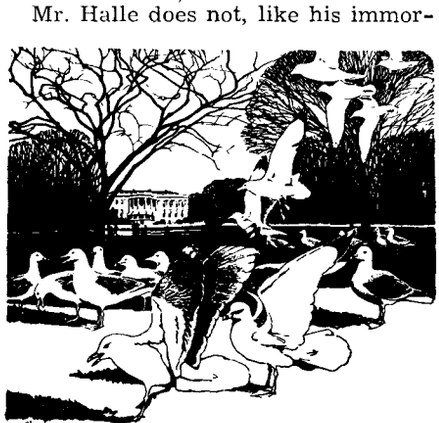
In this fresh and lovely writing Mr. Halle tells the story of the way spring comes to Washington, from the first, chill, spare beginnings until the full oppressive splendor of summer sweeps in. He does it by the now familiar pattern of a string of dated essays, giving us the biological news of the day, together with philosophical reflections and digressions, both pertinent and, in the case of such human phenomena as the halls of Congress, mischievously impertinent. His specialty, of course, is birds and he writes of them with charm and authority. As a bird watcher he is keen, often original, and, underneath his awareness of the beauty of District avifaune, one senses constantly the solidity of his ornithological knowledge.

The publisher of a nature writer is apt to claim him as a second Thoreau, and reviewers, too, are prone to sling the comparison around recklessly. Actually the Man of Walden has never had a successor, either in the knotty originality of Henry's soul, or in the noble prose style. Mr. Halle is, however, his conscious disciple; he likes, he says, to sight along Thoreau's outstretched arm to see things that would otherwise have escaped his notice. When Mr. Halle tells us that men are overbusy about trivial or sordid matters while they ought all to be listening to the song of the thrush, when he calls on the newspapers to print, instead of the stuff they do print, the important news that the blackpoll warbler is back, that is "pure Thoreau," at least in its attitude.

Mr. Halle does not, like his immortal model, feel privileged or in duty bound to scold his neighbors for sixty pages without stopping; he is not sharp-tongued. Yet one could wish that he sometimes treated human beings with more consciousness that man, too, is a part of nature. That the human body, the sound of the human voice, are also beautiful, no less than the flight of the tern and the song of the sparrow. Washington is full of such, but where, in Mr. Halle's Washington spring, is the light, haunting thunder of children's roller skates, or the balloon man's fistful of color in Dupont Circle—both sure signs of spring? Where are the office girls who walk to work, on warm mornings, their bright heads and light dresses moving around the Ellipse through the light and shade of the elms? Where are the old Negro flower vendors, smiling as they hold out black fistfuls of primroses from down Mt. Vernon way?

But Mr. Halle has eyes for other beauty, and with that we may well rest content. His famous illustrator, Francis L. Jaques, has outdone himself in capturing the very spirit of the season and the beloved place.

Donald Culross Peattie, author of "An Almanac for Moderns," conducts a nature column in the Washington Star.



—*From the book.*

"Of all the great cities of America, our national capital is the most truly 'natural' . . . [it] is one vast arboretum."

A Shaky Case

THOMAS PAINE, AUTHOR OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE. By Joseph Lewis. New York: Freethought Press Assn. 1947. 307 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ROGER BALDWIN

AS HEAD of the Freethinkers of America, Joseph Lewis has published his own book to prove laboriously and unsuccessfully that his free-thinking hero, Tom Paine, was the real author of Thomas Jefferson's momentous document. Jefferson's authorship, attested on his tombstone, is thereby a lie.

About all that Mr. Lewis's mountain of research stacks up to is that Paine had some of the same ideas—as is well known—that he used similar language, and was around when the Congress was considering the Declaration. A committee of Congress, under Jefferson's chairmanship, was entrusted with the job; there were of course drafts and copies, and it is out of these that circumstantial evidence is woven to make a shaky case.

Surmises and speculations constitute the evidence. The thesis is about as useful or consequential as proving that Bacon wrote Shakespeare.

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Exposé of Truman Administration

MISSOURI COMPROMISE. By Tris Coffin. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1947. 315 pp. $3.

Reviewed by ROBERT S. ALLEN

THE most significant, coherent, and courageous journalism in the United States today is to be found between the covers of books. On every issue of vital moment to the nation, from municipal rule to atomic control, the ablest reporting, the most reliable information, and the soundest reasoning are on the pages of books. To an ominous degree only dimly realized, books have become our last truly free press frontier.

This is a direct consequence of the far-flung, and steadily intensifying, monopolization of the U. S. press. There are still some liberal and crusading newspapers. But they are very few and far between. Most of them are in small towns. Papers like the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* or *Louisville Courier Journal* can be counted practically on the fingers of one hand. Today, if a citizen wants to find out what is really going on in his home town, the country, or the world, he is forced to turn to books. It is only on pages between book covers that he can hope to obtain the whole and intelligible story.

That fact underlines the real significance and importance of Tris Coffin's "Missouri Compromise." The book is pure journalism, in its finest sense. It is dynamic, vivid, enlightened, and courageous reporting of a quality and character that every honest reporter dreams of being able to do and very few are allowed to do on their papers or on the air. This book is the story of the first twenty months of the Truman Administration—the first time the story has been told in its true perspective and scope and by an experienced and honorable first-hand observer.

That it is a dismal and despairing story is not the author's fault. A crusading newsman, Coffin has "stuck his neck out" many times for liberal causes and leaders. One of a very small group of progressive correspondents in Washington, Coffin knows full well the shabby and sinister depths to which the management of our Federal Government has fallen. The book was clearly written with an anguished heart. But it was also written pungently and excitingly. Every chapter is fast-moving and graphic copy; the kind that used to distinguish the great fighting newspapers of the days of Joseph Pulitzer, E. W. Scripps, Victor Lawson, and Fremont Older. "Missouri Compromise" is absorbing reading, though the story it tells is a heart-rending one.

—*Justus in the* Minneapolis Star.

"Pal o' Mine!"

It's a story that everyone should know in all its shocking detail. That's the only hope if we have any chance at all to escape atomic destruction or bacteriological annihilation, or both. For unless the country knows fully and understands clearly exactly who is ruling it and how, cataclysmic disaster is inevitable.

In virile and bare-knuckled reporting, Coffin strips the who's and how's down to their stark realities. As a CBS reporter covering every aspect of the Capital, he had a unique opportunity to see fully what was going on and why. And as a man of courage, intelligence, and decency he also has the capacity to grasp the full import of what he observed. Much of what Coffin saw, and its significance, he could not report over CBS. He does that in this book, with a vigor and intensity that obviously stems out of long and gnawing repression. This book comes not alone from Coffin's head, but also from the depths of his heart.

"Missouri Compromise" ties together into a coherent mosaic all the great battles of the first phase of the Truman Administration. The savage and sordid mêlées over OPA, housing, civilian control of the Atomic Commission, labor legislation, the Pauley nomination, and other crucial issues are searchingly and devastatingly described. So, too, are the headline and subterranean figures who took part in these momentous brawls. Most of them still are on the scene and still scuttling and polluting, and the country is daily paying the cost in inflationary gouging, lack of housing, war-mongering, chaos-breeding reaction, and disunity and stultification.

The answer to what is happening to you now, and why what lies ahead is so dark and despairing, is to be found in this book. Graphically and pertinently it explains the one hell of a fix in which we find ourselves as a nation.

Coffin is at his best in his searing character sketches. Some are only a few paragraphs in length, but they are devastating. He uses no invectives and does not sermonize. As a crack reporter should do, Coffin puts the individual in his proper setting and lets him "do his stuff." The effect is self-destruction. This technique produces a powerful impact in the portraits of Truman and his "White House gang."

Coffin's account of a visit by the President to his home town, his utter lack of realization of what he was saying in his famous press conference at a picnic when he revealed that the U. S. still was making atom bombs, and the blubbery grossness and crassness of Major General Harry Vaughan, White House Aide, are brilliant reporting. In a few scathing pages the two men betray their true character and caliber with stunning clarity.

One of the most distinctive features of the book is Coffin's skill in pictorializing the settings of the many scenes in which his characters move. This gives the reader a feel and close-up of the Washington arena that contributes much not only to the pleasure of reading the book but to the understanding of the dismal tale it relates.

Robert S. Allen, Washington correspondent and co-author of "Washington Merry-Go-Round," is editor of the new anthology "Our Fair City."

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 203

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 203 will be found in the next issue.

LDBCRFAH PG DT

QOKQXFQMR DXSH FD FWR

ERQCFPTCS.

ZADZRAFPCG—RSRMPRG

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 202

He pays the half, who does confess the debt.

R. HERRICK—"Hesperides."

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Germany's Dance of Death

1. Resistance Within

GERMANY'S UNDERGROUND. By Allen Welsh Dulles. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1947. 198 pages + index. $3.

THEY ALMOST KILLED HITLER. Prepared and edited by Gero S. Gaevernitz. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1947. 150 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by FRANKLIN L. FORD

EVER since Hitler came to power in 1933, and especially since the assassination attempt against him in 1944, the American attitude toward anti-Nazism in Germany has tended to fluctuate between contemptuous curiosity and bitter recrimination. That there was a resistance movement in Germany has in the past two years come to be generally recognized. The aims and composition of the movement, however, are only now being clarified for the English-reading world.

Into fewer than two hundred pages Allen Welsh Dulles has packed a remarkable amount of detail on this difficult subject—so much, in fact, that only the book's concise and urbane style saves the reader from being suffocated by its factual density. Even more important than this readability, perhaps, is the running analysis which controls the narrative throughout, neither belittling the physical courage of many of Hitler's German enemies nor becoming infatuated with their program. To our broadening understanding of World War II, "Germany's Underground" is a contribution of the first magnitude.

Mr. Dulles has drawn on a wide variety of sources: published accounts by participants, living and dead (three such works appeared in Switzerland last year); interviews and documents obtained while he was Chief of the Office of Strategic Services Mission to Germany in 1945; information contained in testimony at Nuremberg; and last but not least, his own experiences. For it is worth emphasizing that, as OSS chief in Switzerland, Mr. Dulles was cabling home reports on the Beck-Goerdeler group six months before the 1944 putsch attempt. Those cables, the "Breakers" Series, constituted one of the great intelligence scoops of the war.

"Germany's Underground" begins and ends with descriptions of the actual assassination attempt on July 20, 1944. The intervening pages are concerned first with a brief survey of what the Nazis had done to subordinate nearly every phase of German life to their Terror. Then follows a discussion of the difficulties peculiar to the German resistance: for example, the conflict of loyalties confronting men for whom anti-Nazism, and patriotism in time of war, did not coincide so obviously as they did for Frenchmen or Norwegians. In succeeding chapters Mr. Dulles deals with some of the varied elements which made up the movement. Finally, there are three chapters devoted to the attempts to reach an understanding with the Allies; the slippery negotiations with Himmler; and the question of future orientation: where should a new regime seek its principal support, from Soviet Russia or from the West?

Notwithstanding the participation of Socialists like Leuschner and Mierendorf, the conspiracy which Mr. Dulles describes was a strongly conservative movement. It did not contain all anti-Nazi elements, but it contained the only ones which could mobilize action against Hitler's police state. Most of its members were anxious not only to oust Hitler but to do so before the Nazi lid should be blown off by a real revolution—one which would destroy their own vested interests as well.

The essential balance of the book is reflected in the care which Mr. Dulles takes to define the previous role of many of these same elements in the subversion of the Weimar Republic: "They were not interested in elections or democracy. After all, they reasoned, Hitler, like Mussolini, would give his country the 'order' which the Germans so highly prized." Or again: "Aristocratic and upper middle class Christians . . . believed Hitler would end political strife and effect economic recovery . . . accepting at face value the Nazi party's claim that it stood for 'a positive Christianity'."

—*"According to Doyle."* [May 1939].

"The mistakes of German anti-Nazis were matched abroad. The West was wrong . . . when it sought peace through appeasement.

It is only in his emphasis on the religious element in German anti-Nazism that Mr. Dulles seems to me to sell his own careful study a trifle short. The moral stature of men like Pastor Bonhoeffer and Cardinal Preysing will scarcely be called into question. On the other hand, the author has faithfully reported the variety of motivations involved in a complex political movement. Having done so, to conclude with the belief that Germans can build upon the memory of the conspirators because they represented "a better strain . . . based largely on a Christian impulse," is to run a serious risk of over-simplification.

The more consistent thesis of Mr. Dulles's study, however, is one which deserves careful consideration. Germany had its criminals, was in fact ruled by criminals for twelve years; but the tragedy of the German population under Hitler was part and parcel of the world's tragedy. The mistakes of German anti-Nazis were for the most part matched abroad. The West was wrong about Hitler when it sought peace through appeasement. The Kremlin was wrong when in the early thirties it confidently anticipated an imminent crumbling in this final stage in the capitalist *Totentanz*. The German Left underestimated the danger of the Nazis. The German Right overestimated its ability to control them. Taken in sum, the history of the period leaves us little cause for self-righteousness. It is true, Mr. Dulles points out, that Germans acted against Hitler's regime only when it threatened to destroy them. Did Americans act by any other rule?

The second offering on the German underground is the personal story of one of the few surviving military conspirators. "They Almost Killed Hitler" is Fabian von Schlabrendorff's own account of his experiences, as prepared and edited by Gero von Schulze Gaevernitz. It does not lend itself to comparison with the Dulles study, because, as Dr. Gaevernitz points out, "this book primarily contains the experiences of one individual . . . it is not a complete story of [the anti-Nazi] movement."

Briefly summarized, Schlabrendorff's career included pre-war contacts with dissident civil servants in Berlin, conspiratorial activities while an officer in Field Marshal von Kluge's headquarters on the Russian front, an unsuccessful attempt to kill Hitler by placing a bomb in his plane in 1943, arrest after the 20th of July, Gestapo interrogations, a fortuitous escape from the seemingly inevitable death sentence and, finally, release by American forces in May 1945. A few days after his release, Dr. Gaevernitz

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picked Schlabrendorff out of a group of special internees on Capri and took him back to Germany to assist in OSS operations there.

The story makes good reading, thanks to Dr. Gaevernitz, and contains much of interest concerning the military-aristocratic elements in the conspiracy, thanks to Herr Schlabrendorff's remarkable memory. In some cases, the data can be checked against other sources; by such tests, the book's accuracy is rather high. In some other cases, however, no corroboration, or very little, is possible. For example, the reader is necessarily asked to accept the details of Schlabrendorff's own attempt to kill Hitler in 1943, as stated. It is reassuring to read that Dr. Gaevernitz learned of this attempt shortly after it occurred. It is not so reassuring, on the other hand to find no mention of the incident in the voluminous diaries of Ulrich von Hassell, who was a central figure in the movement and who knew Schlabrendorff personally.

The danger of disproportion, carefully avoided in the Dulles book, is less successfully sidestepped by Herr Schlabrendorff. There are moments when descriptions of Admiral Canaris, using his formidable intelligence agency to play tricks on his government, or of General von Tresckow, joining in experiments with British-made time bombs at the Central Army Group headquarters, leave the reader curious as to just who was tending to the German war effort anyway. Most of us at the time had the impression that it was going ahead pretty vigorously.

Out of the Schlabrendorff account emerges one point about the conspiracy which he himself is not at pains to emphasize: the pitiful inadequacy of the army dissidents' grasp of what revolt against Hitler would involve. Even after having seen the SS in action in the Blood Purge of 1934, the generals in 1938 talked of a military sitdown strike, and in 1939 planned simply to arrest Hitler during a scheduled inspection tour in the Rhineland. The *coup d'état* was to be as gentlemanly as possible. The Nazis had the advantage of not being gentlemen.

"They Almost Killed Hitler" is fundamentally, however, a grim adventure story. Read as such, it is thoroughly absorbing. Read as history, it is a useful piece of source material. Like any single piece of source material, it needs to be treated with reasonable caution.

After the war Franklin L. Ford prepared a study of the July 20 "putsch" for the OSS. He had access to all relevant intelligence and interrogated most of the surviving participants.

2. *Simplified Primer*

FINAL JUDGMENT. The Story of Nuremberg. By Victor H. Bernstein. New York: Boni & Gaer. 1947. 265 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM E. JACKSON

THE scope of the Nuremberg trial was so vast that to write of it in a single volume is singularly difficult. Victor Bernstein, a reporter who covered the trial for *PM*, has wisely limited his field. His book is aimed not at an appraisal of the trial itself, but at the story of "what the trial revealed."

"Final Judgment" is not to be considered as a scholarly or definitive work. Although most of its material comes from the Nuremberg archives,

a considerable portion comes from other sources hazily identified as "various collecting centers in Germany," and several "documents" turn out to be nothing more than articles from *PM*. The author admits making changes in the documents he quotes, but fails to indicate where, and seldom indicates ellipsis in his amalgamated quotations. There are, moreover, numerous confusions and inaccuracies which a diligent study of the evidence would have avoided. In short, the book is journalism, of the rather slapdash "quickie" variety.

But for what it is—a simplified primer—"Final Judgment" is done with skill and perception. Mr. Bernstein illuminates many dark corners of misunderstanding about the trial. The veil of "honorable soldiers" is ripped from Keitel, Jodl, and most of the *Wehrmacht*, as it is demonstrated that these warriors were accused not because they lost a war but because they started one, and conducted it with unrestrained savagery in partnership with Himmler's depopulation *Einsatzgruppen*. The author also shreds the legend of the "respectable" businessmen, from Krupp and Farben on down, who are shown to have pyramided their profits, in collaboration with the SS, on the corpses of multitudes of foreign slave laborers.

Unlike others of his newspaper colleagues, Mr. Bernstein is not bemused by the glamor of Goering's swashbuckling, heroic posturing. Likewise, he sees through the monumental hypocrisy of the Janus-faced Schacht, recalling the prophetic comment of *Simplicissimus* back in 1931:

> And when we go to war at last,
> Just fight and die—you duffer!
> For win or lose, the war once past,
> Be sure *Herr Schacht* won't suffer!

Not less significant is his demolition of the old refrain that the German people had no idea of what was going on in Germany. He quotes a letter from the mayor of Oranienburg, where one of the network of concentration camps was located, declaring that the "catastrophic conditions" could not be kept secret, for as a result of the gassings and burnings "a sort of pestilential stink spread over the town for weeks."

The weakness of this book is its constant digressions from its announced mission of anatomizing Nazi guilt to nag at the rest of the world, except Russia, for not recognizing from the first tentative symptoms the full evil which it has taken the fruits of war to document conclusively. On this *bête noire* Mr. Bernstein indulges in a shrill, indignant obbligato which seems to taunt from every page: "See, you stupid dolts, what Hitler really was—why did it take you so long to wake up?"

A great deal of space is taken up with the flaying of the extinct corpses of "isolationism" and "appeasement"; this contributes little, however, to the great question which will one day have to be examined, whether our foreign policy of a decade ago, based only on what we knew then, was justified. A satisfactory assessment of the ultimate sources of "war guilt," in the sense of responsibility for letting Hitler become what he became, must wait upon vastly more thorough searchings than will be found in this book, and will not be materially assisted by Mr. Bernstein's frenzied name-calling, of the familiar pattern that makes no effort to distinguish between sincere "isolationists" and "American Fascists."

These strictures would carry more weight if they were not coupled with an ostentatious and strained apologia for the Russians. There are many who belabor the Nuremberg trial because there were no Soviets in the dock. Mr. Bernstein prefers the other extreme and argues that all the Allies except the Russians belonged in "hun-

(*Continued on page* 34)

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Vital Issues Sharply Interpreted

CHINA: A SHORT HISTORY By Owen and Eleanor Lattimore. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. 1947. 214 pp. $3.

Reviewed by RICHARD WATTS, JR.

OWEN and ELEANOR LATTIMORE, who are two of the foremost Occidental authorities on Oriental affairs, wrote a short book several years ago called "The Making of Modern China." It was an excellent job of compression and interpretation, but, since the Japanese were far from beaten in those days and there was no point in giving their radio propaganda aid and comfort, it was a bit reticent in its treatment of contemporary Chinese politics. Now, in these merry times of peace, it has just been republished, in a new and revised edition, under the title of "China: A Short History," and it more than ever deserves the praise, bestowed by the quarterly, *Foreign Affairs*, in calling the earlier version "a masterpiece of lucid historical narrative and interpretation."

The work is still remarkably successful in describing the course of the World's Oldest Living Civilization in so few pages without losing clarity or becoming too superficial, but, for American readers, a book on Chinese history must pretty much stand or fall on the contribution it makes to our knowledge of the current state of a great and sorely troubled land, whose future is inevitably entwined with ours. Here the Lattimores are successful without losing their impressive air of cool objectivity. In fact, in their historical section beginning with the bitterly controversial matter of the split between Chiang Kai-shek and the Communists in 1927, there are moments when they seem so high above the battle that the impartiality appears on the verge of becoming evasion. Fortunately, in the final section, dealing with "Social Change," "The Unfinished Revolution," and "Chinese Politics and World Politics," the interpretation becomes so forthright and sharp that the Lattimore objectiveness is seen as clear-sighted vision, not colorless neutrality about vital issues.

One of the most valuable points which the authors have to make is their warning against the temptation to judge the current situation in China by making comparisons between the civil war there and the American Civil War. This comparison, as they say, is bad history. One difference is that in the United States, "unity had been negotiated by a free agreement between the states, without compulsion, in the Constitutional Convention at the end of the Revolution. The Southern secession was therefore an attempt to break by force a nation which had been created by agreement."

A truer comparison, they note, would be between China now and America at the time of the Revolution and the Constitutional Convention, since the Chinese problem is "to achieve the equivalent of what the Constitutional Convention achieved by negotiated agreement, when the Constitution was adopted as an admitted compromise." They also point out that an apt similarity to our support of the current Kuomintang dictatorship would have occurred "if, at the time of the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, Admiral DeGrasse had urged George Washington to assert personal control over the thirteen States with French backing."

For an American who wants to understand what is going on in China the Lattimores have much to say of importance. There is the matter of the "wartime chemistry of transformation," by which the Kuomintang, originally a coalition of popular forces, became a right-wing party of landlords and army officers while the Communists, once a doctrinaire left-wing group, "came out of the war with wide commitments to compromise, coalition, and private enterprise." There is the contention that "the unorganized majority in China believe that right-wing dictatorship is a more real danger than left-wing dictatorship" and the reminder that inflation has been less marked in areas controlled by the Communists than in Kuomintang China. It is worth their recalling, too, that the Kuomintang, which "began by enlisting the support of the peasants and workers and promising them agrarian reform and representation in the government, has been able to stay in power without raising the standard of living of the peasants who form eighty per cent of the population." In this final section the Lattimores are at their best, which is very good indeed.

Wild Tenants of the North

ALASKA ANIMALS AND FISHES. By Frank Dufresne. New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., Inc. 1946. 297 pp. $5.

Reviewed by ERNEST GRUENING

"ALASKA," writes Frank Dufresne, "is a land of virginal beauty worthy of its wild tenants." These represent the largest surviving variety and abundance of land and water fauna on the North American continent.

First, there is a retrospective chapter on the wild life of Alaska's ice age: the bones and often whole carcasses of some of the Pleistocene animals are constantly being uncovered by the hydraulicking incidental to mid-twentieth-century placer-mining operations. But the dramatic prelude of yester-age has a no less thrilling sequel. For today, over A-ly-es-ka, "The Great Land," roam the giant moose of the Kenai, the Kodiak, and Peninsular brown bear, largest of their kind on earth—to say nothing of the Grizzlies, Polar and other varieties—the caribou of the tundra, the Dall mountain sheep of Alaska's lofty crests, the shaggy mountain goat of the coastal ranges, the wooly musk ox (once actually exterminated in Alaska but now renascent after reimplantation), the wily lynx and rambunctious wolverine, the great wolves, slinking coyotes, and the lesser fur-bearers—fox, beaver, land otter, marten, mink, muskrat, weasel; while the adjacent seas teem with whale, walrus, sea lion, and seals, and the once nearly extinct and supremely prized sea otter is, under vigilant government conservation, staging a comeback. All these are described not merely authoritatively but with vividness and sympathy. As for the sport fish, their variety, uniquely great dimensions, and abundance are fully set forth.

This important—and, in its field, unique—contribution to the literature of Alaska is greatly enhanced by the excellent illustrations—in both color and line—by Bob Hines.

Ernest Gruening is Governor of the Territory of Alaska.

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"Guerrillas," by Joseph Hirsch.

Russian Guerrilla Warfare

COMRADE FOREST. By Michael Leigh. New York: Whittlesey House. 1947. 339 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by IRA WOLFERT

IT IS not surprising that an Irishman should write a story about the Russian guerrillas fighting the late Hitler's late Reichswehr. The Irish have a long tradition of fighting with naked fingers against cannon—the kind of fight that destroys on both sides, the cannoneers as well as the clawers, any feeling that the other side is human, too, or in fact is anything but vulnerable flesh standing in the way of an objective. What is surprising is that the story should come out so Russian. That is an astonishing feather for the cap of this thirty-four-year-old, Dublin-born novelist who was wounded out of the war in 1941.

The feeling for landscape in Mr. Leigh's novel is very fine. The title "Comrade Forest" appears difficult to bear out to those of us—the majority in the world, a census would surely show—who have never had occasion to try to make a friend out of a forest, particularly a Russian forest which, for the bulk of its life, year by year sops in mud or freezes murderously in ice. But the author lives up to his title. He pulls none of the forest's claws. Its winds blow by like artillery shells. Its snows fall like a strangler's pillow. Yet, after living a while in these pages with the Russian guerrillas—peasants mostly, a handful of villagers, a young girl Communist leader, and an "intellectual"—a war correspondent who had become trapped by his assignment into a life of action rather than observation—the forest comes to seem to the reader, too, uncommonly like a comrade, a home from which one goes forth to battle like an animal and to which one returns to live like a person.

Communism is, presumably, a philosophy of internationalism and of the brotherhood of man. But there was a fierce love of nation in the willingness of Russians to die fighting Hitler, and this book communicates it with beautiful and simple passion. Russia never was an easy land to love, no easier than, for example, South Dakota or Nebraska or Kansas. In summer the sun plasters the clothes against one's back as with a trowel. In spring and fall there is the mud, a great toothless mouth sucking one's life down into one's feet. In winter, there is the dreadful cold. But the Russians love it, and, as in all cases of true love, they love even its faults. This book shows them loving it and has further performed the not inconsiderable feat of making this reader understand why.

As for the brotherhood of man, the author notes: "This story is based on fact, on the story of the heroic Soviet woman guerrilla-fighter, Liza Ivanovna Chaikina." He adds, "It is not, however, an exact portrayal of the heroine, though the facts, as related, follow closely her epic story." So the brotherhood of man emerges here as it emerged in fact among all the hordes of desperate, desperately embittered races who fought underground in this last appalling decade of ours from Manchuria all the way around the world to Burma; that is, deviously, twisted, and clouded over by a steam of hatred, the kind of hatred that allows a man to express recognition of the humanness of his enemy only in the way that he tortures him.

This is a central fact of guerrilla armies and one of the strengths of this novel is that it does not blink it. Formal armies do not operate in this way against each other. I recall Ernie Pyle's rage one afternoon in France when one of the boys of the Luftwaffe bailed out and was hustled with something less than delicacy into captivity by the cooks and clerks he had been strafing a moment before. Ernie came near to making those lads of ours curl up and die of shame with the tongue-lashing he gave them, but I am quite sure that if Ernie had been with a guerrilla army the only rage he would have felt would have been at delay in killing the ambassador from Herr Goering.

For that is what happens in guerrilla hearts and in the hearts of those who fight them. Murder happens, pure, venomous, snakelike murder. A guerrilla is a naked man trying to oppose a mechanical force by stuffing his naked flesh into its gears. And the soldier in an army fighting guerrillas finds, terrified, that his mechanical force does not work as it works against other mechanical forces and that he must turn his own self into an equivalent of a brute weapon.

I remember the Filipino guerrilla on Leyte who found a ten-year-old boy who had been bribed by the Japanese to spy on the underground. The guerrilla broke open the child's head and then tried to force the child's twelve-year-old sister to drink a cup of the blood to teach her not to follow in her brother's footsteps. This is the kind of ferocity I mean, and it is the kind of ferocity communicated and made understandable by Mr. Leigh.

The story he tells is a simple one of people who fled into the forest when their village was invaded by the Germans, and who fought from there with the kind of telling effect that made Goebbels issue a communique once describing the Russians as treacherous and inhuman because they would not stay dead when killed. There is not only hate and violence in this book, but love, too, and compassion, a fine warmth for the earthy goods of life and the irrepressible humor of healthy people, and, above all, a tale that moves like the Burlington Zephyr when it's highballing.

It ought to make handy reading for those "Get-tough-with-Russia" boys who don't know yet quite how tough they will have to get, after dropping that atomic bomb on Moscow.

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Paris in the Fall

AURELIEN. By Louis Aragon. Translated by Eithne Wilkins. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1947. *2 vols. boxed.* 680 *pp.* $6.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

LOUIS ARAGON is known in this country as a poet and an active fighter in the French resistance. He is also known to readers of the anti-Stalinist press as one of Moscow's most ardent converts. "Aurélien" will make him known as a novelist of solid virtues, a worker in the main tradition of French fiction.

Aragon was once a Dadaist, but here is no eccentricity, no experimentation, no avant-garde exhibitionism. Aragon has been and is a mouthpiece of Stalinism, but here is no propaganda. Here, on the contrary, is a conventional story, told in conventional prose; a well-constructed tale, with substantial characters, interesting action, social depth, and a Parisian background, or foreground, that is brilliantly realized. Here, too, is eloquence; and that is a rarity just now. Too much of the writing that we call our best carries the marks of labor, even displays them proudly. Readers are too often made conscious of studied word arrangements, done for display, calculated to command admiration; too often made conscious of a prose-making that proceeds constrictedly sentence by sentence. Aragon's prose, even in translation, flows as from a full reservoir. But this flow is always controlled by an alert talent.

Belonging to the line that it does, "Aurélien" is of course a love story, written with emphasis upon the psychological rather than physiological aspects of its subject. In contrast to the present common practice among American novelists, M. Aragon devotes himself not to the moments (or hours) of love's consummation, but to the troubled and complex stages which sometimes, even today, precede love's climax. Indeed, in his central story, there is no consummation. Aurélien loves Bérénice through many pages, and is loved in return; but the lady, even when entirely surrounded, does not capitulate. It is quite possible that she will seem an exasperating sort of heroine to readers who have grown accustomed to more available girls. Other readers, however, will find her a well-rounded novelist's creation, worth following through all her phases: through her relations with Aurélien, whom she loves without giving; with Paul Denis, to whom she gives without loving; and with her husband, who claims from her so many empty years.

We become acquainted with Aurélien in 1920, when he has just turned thirty. It has been his misfortune to spend almost eight years in the French Army, for he was finishing his term of military service when the Germans struck through Belgium. The pattern of his life has been badly distorted, the balance of his personality severely strained. He is a young man with money, with bachelor quarters in the Ile Saint-Louis, and without a purpose. He had assumed that life would be simple, once the war was won, that a plan would naturally present itself. But it is not enough to win a war. One must know how to be victorious. And Aurélien does not know. So he drifts through his days and nights, making successful love to fashionable women, but forming no permanent connections, sleeping with friendly prostitutes, staying late in hospitable bars, cheating sleep—and, incidentally, life—in all the ways he can. He is the man without a purpose, the man who is going nowhere, who lives only because there would be no point to suicide.

Then he meets Bérénice, a provincial cousin of the taxi magnate Edmond Barbentane, who is an old comrade-in-arms of Aurélien's. Bérénice, young and eager, having left her chemist husband at home in the country, is enjoying her first Parisian visit, under the hospitable guidance

—*Georgeth Chadourne.*

"'Aurélien' will make Louis Aragon known as a novelist of solid virtues, a worker in the main tradition of French fiction."

of the Barbentanes. Edmond decides that Aurélien, among other metropolitan experiences, will be good for his little cousin. He deliberately tries to bring the two together. At first the maneuver fails, for Aurélien is not attracted. Then, suddenly, it succeeds; and the man who has never said to any woman, "I love you," assures himself that he is in love for the first time.

The love story of Aurélien Leurtillois and Bérénice Morel is one of conflicting desires and common frustration, of illusions shared, reciprocal

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

SOME "O" LINES IN POETRY

The quotations that make up this week's quiz all begin with "O" or "Oh." Can you name the poets who wrote them? Allowing five points for each correct answer, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers are on page 34.

1. Oh, to be in England, now that April's there!
2. Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story.
3. O, then we'll wed, and then we'll bed—but not in our alley!
4. O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!
5. Oh sleep! it is a blessed thing, beloved from pole to pole!
6. Oh, threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise!
7. O God, that bread should be so dear, and flesh and blood so cheap!
8. O for a beaker full of the warm South!
9. Oh! that we two were Maying!
10. Oh, East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet!
11. O, if you felt the pain I feel! But O, who ever felt as I?
12. Oh! let us be married; too long we have tarried!
13. O mistress mine, where are you roaming?
14. O, wind, if Winter comes can Spring be far behind?
15. O Death in Life, the days that are no more!
16. Oh somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining bright.
17. O God! our help in ages past, our hope for years to come!
18. O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done!
19. Oh for boyhood's time of June!
20. O joy! that in our embers is something that doth live.

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delusions, and private self-deceptions. The whole affair has one shape and meaning to the man, another shape and meaning to the woman. When closest together, they are a world apart. He is intent on taking. So is she, but without giving. On his side, physical desire wears the cloak of romantic surrender. On her side, even while she is incapable of action, she knows as little of herself as did Emma Bovary. Each discovers changing motives in the other, uncovers unpleasing depths. With the man, love sometimes gives place to hate. With the woman, love is sometimes obliterated by contempt. Yet when it is all over, when they have parted, both are sure that they have known the great passion of their lives. The illusion is good for almost twenty years. Only in an epilogue is the truth faced.

M. Aragon tells this main story, as he does his related stories, with psychological knowledge, emotional intensity, narrative skill, and descriptive subtlety. His matrix is the Paris of 1920-21, or at least that part of Paris which belonged to corrupt business men, ambitious and lecherous women, war veterans, *noctambules*, and fumbling artists; a Paris which was a seed-bed for coming growths. His stage is peopled with characters that are not merely types, and he is notably able in the management of crowded scenes; this ability like eloquence, being rare among our present novelists, who are often happiest when they are cosily ensconced within a single skull. When, on the contrary, Louis Aragon takes us to a party at Mary de Perseval's, into the Bois on Sunday, to Zamorra's midnight exhibition, to Lulli's bar, to an old soldiers' reunion, or to a ducal rout, he does so with the expertness of a director who is in constant control of his stage and his actors. And, present through a great part of this novel, is the city itself; the look and feel and smell of it; ever-changing in its aspects, various in its nature, but still essentially changeless.

I have said that there is no propaganda in "Aurélien." But there is historical significance, or, let us say, a moral. France, like the two lovers, fed on an illusion for almost twenty years; and it is in his epilogue, when French troops are facing bitter disillusionment that the author presses his point home. Aurélien murmurs to Bérénice: "How ridiculous life is. We've ruined our lives. Not only you and me, but everyone, everything. We won the war, and then—we ought—" And a little later we read:

> This meeting, too, this reunion after twenty years was another rout. It was really costing him an effort to recognize this woman, a stranger to him now, as the love of his life. He had kept the idea of Bérénice in his heart, but Bérénice disturbed the idea by her presence. . . . He could not recognize Bérénice, and he couldn't recognize France. Was this the France he had known in his youth, the same country for which he had fought once more—was it the same now in this downfall, the wild flight down the roads, the young men on bicycles and the girls in shorts? No, no, no! It was the Republic, but it wasn't France. . . . This wasn't Bérénice, this woman who had aged—his Bérénice was the plaster mask, that young dead girl who would remain beautiful for ever. And France, too, the France he loved, was dead; it wasn't the same as the France he could see before his eyes. There was happiness in loving the dead whether it was a woman or a country; he could make anything he like of it, for it could not speak and suddenly say something he wished it had not said.

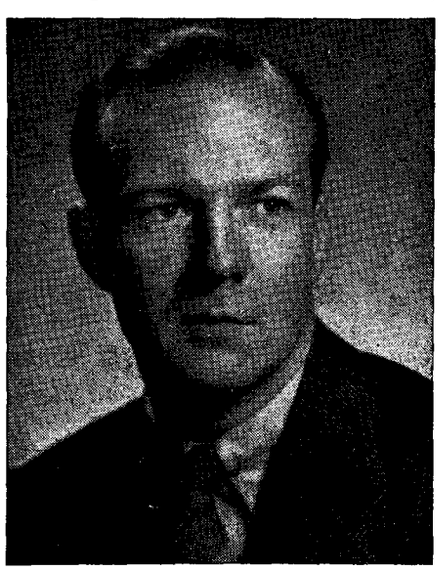
It is obvious from his artistic record that Louis Aragon, after the First World War, was desperately seeking self-assurance and certitude. It is almost certain that it was this search which carried him to Moscow. Judging by "Aurélien," it is quite possible that he will end by finding certitude where he first sought it: in literature.

No Rational World

PREPARED FOR RAGE. By Mark Saxton. New York: William Sloane Assoc., Inc. 1947. 360 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

IT seems a long time ago, back in the middle 1920's, when Jules Romains was beginning his endless epic under the general title of "Men of Good Will" and when people everywhere nurtured the phrase as a sort of intellectual amulet to insure salvation and the triumph of reason. Everywhere young men—of whom the Jeremy Osgood of this novel is a good case in point—were striving to be reasonable and sensitive and intelligent and to examine the world about them with scientific impartiality. Jeremy grew up in the sheltered confines of Gramercy Park and moved from there through a good prep school and four years at Harvard. In all of this educational preparation he was sharpening a questioning intelligence, learning to understand his emotions, and preparing to apply rational principles to a rational world. What he found, of course, was that there was no rational world. It was already seething with the overtures to World War II, splitting into two camps neither of which could find place for him. Neither interventionist nor isolationist, Jeremy found himself fighting a lone battle for first principles, and was no longer too sure of just what those were. His friend Martin Slone made one kind of decision and died in a CO Camp. Jeremy made another and went into the Navy when drafted, refusing a commission. He was not brave, nor sure of what he believed, but he knew that the war, once joined, had to be won. It was the only ground beneath his feet.



—*Leja Gorska.*

Mark Saxton's "man of good will was no better prepared to face the holocaust" than men less endowed.

Jeremy's story follows along fairly well-worn channels in tracing the development of a characteristic man of good will; and the point of it is that he was no better prepared to face the holocaust then were men less well endowed, both mentally and spiritually. I am not certain that the book has any other point, unless it be that there is no way of being prepared, that we have to learn for ourselves, from the beginning, every time. It seems a despairing footnote to an old and now discredited way of learning. Mr. Saxton knows that there is no longer any time to learn that way. We've got to remember—and there is a special plea set down at the start of the story to indicate that. Nevertheless the book is interesting for its recreation of that between-wars blooming of faith in right reasoning and good will, right up to the moment when these were discovered to be useless weapons. Jeremy Osgood and his contemporaries seem further removed from today's world than do their grandfathers. They were a generation of dreamers. This novel tells again, and thoughtfully, the story of their rude awakening.

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Precocious Adolescent

THE TWO WORLDS OF JOHNNY TRURO. By George Sklar. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1947. 372 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by SARA HENDERSON HAY

IT IS not an unusual situation for a boy of seventeen to fall in love with an older woman. Innumerable adolescents have done just that; have yearned, dreamed, suffered all the pangs of an awakening physical maturity amid the confusion of intellectual and emotional immaturity. It is more unusual when the woman returns that love and becomes passionately and emotionally involved with, and dependent on, a boy hardly half her age. Mr. Sklar has set himself the difficult and delicate task of making such a relationship understandable and acceptable. I do not think he has quite succeeded; not because the situation itself is impossible, but because the two people involved, Johnny, aged seventeen, and Helen Borden, thirty-one, are inconsistent and unreal.

The two worlds of Johnny Truro are the awkward, frustrating world of adolescence, and that desired realm of adulthood, between which is fixed a painful gulf filled with restless longing, desperate inadequacy, and the humiliation of being neither a child nor a man. The trouble is that Mr. Sklar has tried to make Johnny, at this period, both these creatures simultaneously—a state very different from that chrysalis period of being really neither one nor the other. The world was at war, but Johnny, though physically developed beyond his years and, Mr. Sklar wants us to believe, intellectually more mature than most boys of his age, was confronted on all sides with the fact that he was considered just a high-school kid. There is little real evidence in the author's portrayal of Johnny's character and personality that he was very much more than that. He and his friends experimented with sex, boasted, strutted, worked off their energies in any way they could. They were

> driven toward the sensational, the desperate. They wanted to show the world, to demonstrate with one defiant gesture that they, too, belonged. They wanted attention, recognition, respect. You had to understand the root drives and urges, the tornado of torment which seethed in these boys of sixteen and seventeen in a world at war.

Into Johnny's life came Helen Borden, married, with a husband in the Air Force overseas; a woman nearly twice Johnny's age, an amateur artist, lonely, unhappy, and certainly abnormally susceptible. Mr. Sklar attempts to explain Helen's character by having her say:

> I'm not a very self-reliant creature, Johnny. I need other people; my whole pattern is dependency, I need the manly chest to lean on. I was brought up that way. I had a couple of doting parents and was sheltered and pampered as only children often are.

This seems hardly a convincing explanation, however, of why she found Johnny's the manly chest she needed, or why, dependent on love or not, she could become seriously and completely involved, physically and intellectually and emotionally, with a boy of seventeen. There is something rather abnormal and distasteful about it, though Mr. Sklar tries desperately to make it seem the inevitable and wholly natural union of two complementary personalities, brought together by a mutual recognition of each other's essential qualities of body and mind, a relationship on which a discrepancy of age would have little bearing.

Mr. Sklar wants us to believe that Helen's love for Johnny was an ennobling and eventually constructive experience for him, that she helped him direct his artistic talent and brought him to maturity and self-realization. But it appears to me that, as it is presented here, such an experience was more tragic and unproportioned and damaging than it was good and noble. She could have helped him immeasurably more than she did, and Mr. Sklar's evident sincerity and belief in an essential virtue and honesty in their relationship has not been able to overcome a certain more than suspect unhealthiness and psychological abnormality.

First and Third-Class Stereotypes

THE SEA IS WOMAN. By Albert E. Idell. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1947. 321 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by NANCY G. CHAIKIN

I HAVE not made up my mind, yet, as to just *why* the sea is woman, and I don't think that you will make up yours, when you read this little book. In fact, I think that the title of Mr. Idell's novel holds just about as much profound significance as the rest of his well-meaning book, which is not, I'm sorry to say, a great deal. His central situation—a group of people literally all in the same boat for a number of days—has been used before as a fictional set-up, with a good deal more success. And what he obviously intended was a psychological study of these people, as they play upon one another's nervous systems and their various backgrounds and prejudices reveal themselves in their shipboard conduct and thoughts.

Albert Idell's "contribution to theories of ... society, democracy is extremely naïve."

Here we have a group of third-class passengers—the idealistic Doctor Brandt, who is running away from the memories of his participation in World War One; a Dutch nurse of pleasant disposition and healthy appetite; a disillusioned female missionary; a middle-class Milquetoast illusionist, vaguely reminiscent of one Walter Mitty; all their third-class shipmates (including the well-worn figure of the alcoholic, has-been actor), the mutinous crew, and a pair of honeymooners, first-class passengers, who make love shamelessly at the swimming pool which the others may not use. Mr. Idell examines everything from the causes of war to the indignities of class-distinction, and I cannot honestly say that his story moves well or that he has thrown important light on any one of his numerous subjects. His people are stereotypes; his contribution to theories of politics, society, democracy, is extremely naïve. And, while there is a certain amount of drama in his hurricane sequence—as the third-class passengers huddle together—it is quickly dispelled in melodrama, as the actor, for vague reasons, meets his death in an act of heroism.

The story moves slowly, somewhat awkwardly, and whatever subtlety lies potentially therein is speedily destroyed by the author, who seems bent on explaining things either out of existence or into a realm of absurd and shallow simplicity.

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"The Prince of Quietists"

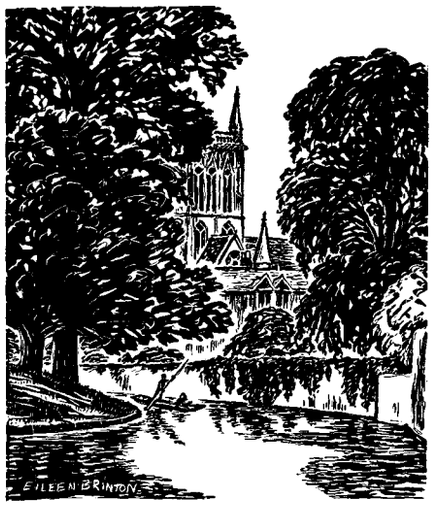
THE LIFE OF EDWARD FITZGERALD. By Alfred McKinley Terhune. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1947. 362 pp. + Index. $5.

Reviewed by R. ELLIS ROBERTS

HE WAS called "old Fitz" when he was an undergraduate, and afterwards. Thackeray called him "old Fitz," and so did Tennyson. The epithet was more than one of deep affection, though few of the great Cambridge set were better loved. The others, the little company of friends, Spedding, Allen, Thackeray, Tennyson, Donne (a neglected collateral descendant of the great poet) had for Edward FitzGerald a respect, slightly envious perhaps, as for a man of greater maturity, quieter wisdom than they could claim. He was astonishingly self-sufficient, and supremely sure of himself, heedless of criticism. He was affectionate, but could not be influenced: and had found for himself a philosophy years before; under the worry of a farcical marriage, he discovered its echoes in an unknown Persian poet of the eleventh century and gave to English literature the "Rubaiyat" of Omar Khayyam.

Edward FitzGerald, wrote James Spedding, "is the Prince of Quietists. . . . Half the self-sacrifice, the self-denial, the moral resolution, which he exercises to keep himself easy, would amply furnish forth a martyr or a missionary. His tranquillity is like a pirated edition of the Peace of God." And James Spedding, who devoted a long life to editing the works of Francis Bacon, was himself "a quiet man." William Bodham Donne called his friend "Diogenes without the dirt"; Thackeray told his elder daughter, not long before his death, that of all his friends he loved "old Fitz" the best. And in a letter to Thackeray, on his first visit to America, Edward FitzGerald wrote to his friend:

> Meanwhile, I truly believe there is no man alive loves you (in his own way of love) more than I do. Now you are gone out (of) England, I can feel something of what I should feel if you were dead: I sit in this seedy place and read over Bouillabaisse till I cry again. This really is so: and is poor work: were you back again, I should see no more of you than before. But this is not from want of love on my part: it is because we live in such different worlds: and it is almost painful to me to tease anybody with my seedy dullness, which is just bearable to myself. Life every day seems a more total failure and mess to me: but it is yet bearable: and I am become a sad Epicurean—just desirous to keep on the windy side of bother and pain. . . .



As a work of research and scholarship Mr. Terhune's biography could not be better. It is not his fault that he was unable to consult Mr. Ray's definitive edition of Thackeray's private papers and letters and so has had to be content with only an extract from one of FitzGerald's letters, a letter bearing even stronger evidence to Fitz's generosity and unchangeable affection than that from which I have quoted. No one of the Cambridge set had a longer memory or a profounder love for old friends than the queer, scholarly, stoical bachelor who was indifferent to fame, content (except in one book and an essay or two) to mount other men's "winged horses"—Aeschylus's, Sophocles's, Calderon's, Omar Khayyam's, Jami's, and Attar's.

Mr. Terhune is an admirable guide to FitzGerald's literary work; he gives sufficient space and praise to the transfigurations of Calderon, and of Jami's "Paradise of the Birds." FitzGerald never claimed to be a translator—he arranged other men's flowers, adding new posies of his own. The scholar may disapprove, if he will; but no one can deny the exquisite beauty of the work at its most successful.

As a biography of the man this book, detailed, based largely on new material, and carefully documented, is a painstaking but uninspired piece of work. Few Victorian authors need reinterpretation as much as FitzGerald. Two facts, duly recorded by Mr. Terhune, are never sufficiently emphasized. FitzGerald was an aristocrat; his father was John Purcell who married a cousin, Mary Frances FitzGerald, and changed his surname; and the Purcells and FitzGeralds belonged to two of the oldest Norman-Irish families. FitzGerald's ease, his superb indifference to public opinion, to any kind of criticism of his conduct, were quite simple—it did not occur to him to live other than he wished, though he would explain himself to his friends. And it becomes increasingly clear from this biography that FitzGerald thought of himself always as Irish, not English—and somewhere, deep down in any Irishman, is a willingness to go against English conventions. So Edward FitzGerald cared nothing if his clothes were odd and shabby, his life queer, or that his friends included not only Professor Cowell, Archdeacon Allen, and Thomas Carlyle but also Jo Fletcher, called "Posh," and other Aldeburgh fishermen. It is good news that Mr. Terhune is planning a new and complete edition of FitzGerald's letters. No prose is more delightful than his, more skilful in the use of a gentle irony and a playful extravagance.

Iowa Vignettes

BUT LOOK, THE MORN. By MacKinlay Kantor. New York: Coward-McCann. 1947. 308 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by PHIL STONG

ALL writers with a sense for the trivialities that may prove to be historical or significant have magpie tendencies, but one seldom sees them so developed and profitably exploited as in this generous group of scenes from the life of Webster City, Iowa, in the early 1900's. The book has no recognizable organization; it presents the important verities of a very young boy's life in a particular scene, as edited by his mature mind. It is true, sometimes harshly true, and a sound testament.

The account begins with the birth of the author—immediately the guest of his grandparents—and concludes with the failure of his mother to marry, by her own choice, a second husband, a doctor who was reluctant to assume responsibility for her whole family. In between is a pastiche of Webster City scenes, sometimes gay—as when the pompous "bologna" Taft spoke at a celebration—and sometimes tragic, as when the mother's suitor destroys, quite reasonably, a beloved dog already hurt to death.

Kantor admires and pities his mother; even Samuel Butler could not have been more severe about his father. It was not "Life with Father"—as described, it was no-life with a scoundrel. This reviewer, lacking experience in the premises, leaves the question of good taste strictly to the reader.

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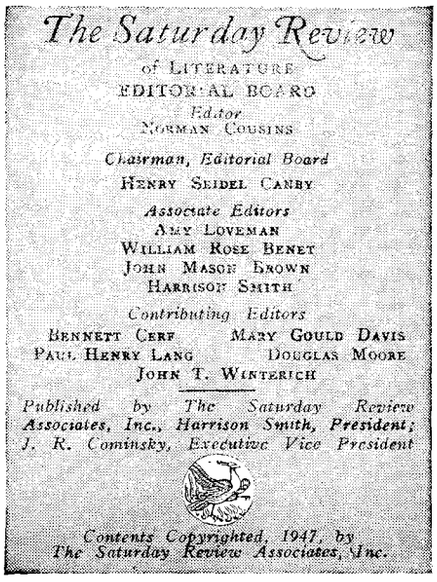

Willa Cather
(1876-1947)

1. A Reminiscence

AMONG the novelists who reached their height of achievement in the twenties was Willa Cather, whose death on April 24 ends a great career in American literature. She had already, before the twenties, shown what Americans could do with the rich experience of pioneer life. A personable woman, of finely cut features, with a delicate flush which deepened when ideas warmed her imagination, she was definitely an intellectual aristocrat. She had a way of summoning you to a tea or a conference which proved not the less stimulating because commanded. Actually, as one soon found out, she was guarding her working hours and working energy. She had a fierce devotion to her art which was not vanity, but came from a clearer view than that of most of her contemporaries of the difficulty of achieving even a relative perfection. You can read about it, written of others but applicable to herself, in a book of her essays called "Not Under Forty."

Willa Cather's mind had the precision of a scholar's, the penetration of a critic's, and the warm intellectuality of a creative artist's. She had led an active editorial life on the staff of the old *McClure's*, which had put the vitality of new European minds and the audacity of the American muckrakers into a cheap and readable magazine just when the genteel periodicals were going stale. It could be tough; it was sensational; respectable editors regarded it as a portent of vulgarity—which only shows that the vulgarity of one generation may prove to be the respectable realism of another. She had done her job in the literary, not the muckraking department, and had wholeheartedly retired into the art of fiction.

As we sat talking, she would ask me the news of that old editorial world; what had happened as a result of this or that, or where were the old fighters now and what were they doing. I could only reply that I lived in an ivory tower in those days and did not know the answers. But this was an introduction to our real talk. Miss Cather was one of the few writers I have known who passionately desired to talk of the craft of good writing with only the most indirect reference to her own work. In this she had what I should call a Gallic mind. The subject matter of her most important books was taken from what was most vital in American pioneer experience, yet the tradition of her craftsmanship was certainly French. The name of Flaubert was often on her lips. She had the not uncommon passion for perfection—but what she liked to analyze as we talked was what constituted perfection for a given situation or a theme. This is French rather than English or American, and when pursued in writing by an Englishman or an American often leads to artificiality. Not so with her. She wished to know how the great ones achieved, not to imitate them. Her idea was that the consummate artist in fiction gave himself entirely to the situation he chose for his story, following its *nuances*, not shaping it to preconceived effects. That was what she wanted to talk about; what she did herself in "O Pioneers" and "Death Comes for the Archbishop."

Not long ago I sat with Miss Cather at a meeting of the National Institute of Arts and Letters, at which she was to be given the gold medal in fiction, their highest honor. She had been ill, her face was drawn, her pace a little unsteady. That day a special award for lifetime service was given to Samuel McClure, then well into his eighties. When he was helped to the platform, the color came back to her cheeks, and, with the warm impulsiveness one finds always in her best heroines, she ran forward and kissed and embraced him. I do not suppose that Willa Cather was the greatest American novelist of the 1910's and '20's, bigness was not her *métier*—that she left to the Upton Sinclairs, who had less art. Certainly she was the most skilful, and one of the best.

* * *

2. A Critical Appraisal

Willa Sibert Cather, born in 1876 in mountain Virginia, was transplanted to the rolling grass lands of Nebraska in time to know a frontier. Sensitive to beauty, and quick to detect significance, she saw the great land make and break its people. She saw the full-blooded European immigrants, Czechs and Swedes, ploughing the unbroken land, on the way up from peasants to proprietors. She saw their puzzled admiration of American culture, which was also immigrant in these wild plains, but grown successful and a little stiff and stale. She saw the break between the generations when the children of the foreign pioneers came to town, to become more smug, more conventional than their American neighbors. Yet the fresh blood she describes was still vigorous. What reader will forget the Czech and Danish servants and working girls in "My Antonia," rash in love, warm in heart and body, still seeking passion in the small-town respectability of the settled Middle West!

Miss Cather was educated at the University of Nebraska; she taught, found her way back East, and became an editorial assistant on Samuel McClure's magazine, the periodical which torpedoed the great monthlies of the genteel age, now growing safe and dull. Raids against the corruption and decay of politics at the end of the nineteenth century were its specialty, but McClure opened his columns to the new literature appearing on both sides of the Atlantic. Either then or later, Miss Cather's creative mind ranged widely through literature, and she chose her tradition in craftsmanship, which was French, and her subject matter, which was the heroic but neglected *virtus* of the last pioneers of the unconquered West. In 1912, she left *McClure's;* in 1913, she published "O Pioneers!"; in 1915, "The Song of the Lark"; in 1918, "My Antonia"; in 1920, her brilliant short stories, "Youth and the Bright Medusa"; in 1923, "A Lost Lady," her most skil-

The Shoppers

By Genevieve Ellis

WE who are dying everywhere,
We buy these clothes to wear
to die in,
Fit these lonely robes to lie in,
Wearing shadows unaware.

We women, imminently doomed
Into celestial lines of waiting,
Ladies in arrested mating,
Matrons arduously groomed:

Why burn to costlier ashes, buy
In variance with our stringent giving,
Who lease these gowns for borrowed
living
And rent these pearls to wear to die?

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ful, though not her most powerful work; in 1927, "Death Comes for the Archbishop," her masterpiece; in 1931, "Shadows on the Rock." These are her most important books.

Willa Cather, like the greatest of her predecessors among women in English fiction, Jane Austen, was extraordinarily consistent in her art from beginning to end. She did not experiment except within the limits of her purpose; she knew exactly what she wanted to do. And this can be described in her own words from a book, "Not Under Forty" (1936), in which she recorded her admiration for her own master in the art of fiction, Gustave Flaubert, and for her older contemporary, Sarah Orne Jewett:

> The novelist must learn to write, and then he must unlearn it [for his material must go] through a process very different from that by which he makes merely a good story. No one can define this process exactly; but certainly persistence, survival, recurrence in the writer's mind, are highly characteristic of it. The shapes and scenes that have "teased" the mind for years, when they do at last get themselves rightly put down, make a much higher order of writing, and a much more costly than the most vivid and vigorous transfer of immediate impressions. Every fine story must leave in the mind of the sensitive reader an intangible residuum of pleasure; a cadence, a quality of voice that is exclusively the writer's own, individual, unique. . . . It is a common fallacy that a writer . . . can achieve this poignant quality by improving upon his subject-matter, by using his "imagination" upon it and twisting it to suit his purpose. The truth is that by such a process (which is not imagination at all!) he can at best present only a brilliant sham. . . . If he achieves anything noble, anything enduring, it must be by giving himself absolutely to his material. And this gift of sympathy is his great gift; is the fine thing in him that alone can make his work fine.

This is what Willa Cather proposed to do in her novels; she suceeded, thanks to a discipline in the absolute justice of the word, which she may have learned from Flaubert, and by an art of suspense, which she acquired probably from her own experience with the American short story, in which she was both critic and creator. Jane Austen let what "teased" her imagination flow along the framework of a conventional plot. She twisted neither plot nor subject matter to suit her purpose, and when her sympathy was discharged and her plot unrolled, was content to end with the handiest convention. Willa Cather discarded plot from the beginning. She yielded to her subject matter, content to evoke its cadences, its qualities, its stream of significant experience. Even the poignant death of the lovers in "O Pioneers!", surely one of the notable scenes in English literature, is known only by its preliminaries and its evidences, as if to have made it a climax of a plot would have detracted from its perfect place in a chronicle of a land so immature, so hard that passion can find only a thwarted release.

Therefore, from beginning to end, the Cather novels are not stories of plot, but chronicles, given a depth and significance lacking in the merely historical chronicle by that "sympathy" which leads to a perfect interplay of environment and character.

Her art was essentially a representation of this reaction between the soul of man and its environment. That is why the best of her stories are told against the land—the sweep of red grass on the rolling plains of Nebraska, the hard, warm mesas of the Southwest tempering the unconquerable spirit of the archbishop, shadows of the wilderness and the winter crowding in upon the tiny culture of France on the rock of Quebec. Her best characters are least at home in the fabricated cities which so stirred the naïve heart of Sinclair Lewis's Babbitt. Chicago as a city, to Thea when she is learning to sing in "The Song of the Lark," means only trivial discomfort and an irrelevant confusion.

With "Death Comes for the Archbishop," Willa Cather left even the semblance of fiction for pure chronicle. This novel is the *vitae* of two saints, a Paul and a Peter of the desert, and its story is a record of their minds and hearts and souls. So was "O Pioneers!" the story of a group of immigrants humanizing the land, so was "My Antonia" the story of a great woman ennobling common things and a common struggle by elemental passion. But in the two obvious chronicles, of the archbishop and of the rock of Quebec, the narrative is distilled into biography. Here were lives working upon and wrought upon by a new land and its people. And the same was true of her late book "Sapphira and the Slave Girl" (1940), with its unsatisfactory ending, where the teller of the tale does what Flaubert (so she says) never would do, enters herself upon the scene and "encourages familiarity."

If one asks how these chronicles are made evocative, comprehensive, and interest-holding, the answer is as easy to define as it is difficult to explain in detail. There is a selection of incident and appearance, and an inevitability of language (as with Flaubert and Turgenev) so careful that the result is a candid, if delusive, simplicity. It is candid because the author so evidently has given herself to the theme and found words for her experience; it is delusive because this simplicity is, of course, not easy but a fine art. And her own absorption in her people and her land creates the suspense that she herself has felt.

She was consistent in this craft, and also in her choice of character and theme. Like all the important novelists of this end of an era, she sought an emotional vitality great enough to break through stiffening conventions and repel the ideas of materialistic success. Her stories present the old case of the artist *vs.* the people, the heart *vs.* what the public calls success, the life of the spirit *vs.* materialism, a case under trial for a century in prosperous America. But she offered an interesting variant in organizing her stories about the life of a good man or woman—good in this case meaning a human being intensely, often rapturously devoted to the experiences of deep living itself. Alexandra in "O Pioneers!" is such a person with the emphasis upon a will to tame the American land for the needs of the future. Marie, the Bohemian girl, in the same book, is the essence of being alive, the very pulse of the blood personified, doomed to be the victim somehow of what we so justly call ill nature. Antonia is such a character, not too fine, not too nice in her ethics, determined upon happiness and getting it because she

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never counts the costs. Mrs. Forrester in "A Lost Lady" is not lost because of her adulteries. She is lost because her incomparable gift of charm cannot sustain itself by its own worth, but must feed on the gross sensualities of gross men. Her husband is the good man of this story, good because he understands that his wife is a precious jewel worth all the tribe about her, even though fibered with clay.

AS Willa Cather grew older, she seemed to have exhausted her own best memories, and sought in history for subject matter less personal and more difficult. And so (influenced perhaps again by Flaubert) she left the present, left her own Middle West, and absorbed herself in the austere, ascetic, intractable beauty of New Mexico, and the Catholic culture of Quebec. Yet her characters have the same significance. The archbishop again is the good man endeavoring to make life and himself not more or less prosperous, but richer in spiritual passion, though he had no prejudices against the earthly variety. His good is *virtus* — character, love of experience, including emphatically the vitality of sensuous experience. He is a good man whose energy is challenged by the opportunities in a new land to create new and better experience for his followers. Thus when he comes in the wake of American conquest to New Mexico, he pioneers for his church with an almost sensual satisfaction. He is aware of the value of every genuine emotion, whether the gusto of the half pagan priests of the old regime, or the Castilian decorum of his Spanish patrons, or the dark and true part-souls of his Indians. Only the cheap and the predatory rouse him to anger. With him is Father Joseph, a good animal irradiated by religion, a medieval saint saved from fanatical disaster by the finer intellect of the man he loves. The novel itself is the projection of these two lives against a compelling environment. It is good history, but it transcends history because its theme is the vitality of holiness. There is little to add in this respect of her later "Shadows on the Rock," which, with less power but equal purity, portrays the good life in conflict with worldly ambition and the wilderness in seventeenth-century Quebec.

Thus Willa Cather usefully filled her niche in American literary history. Her youthful background in the unmade West, and her sensitiveness to the pervasive influence of new land upon European man, made her the summer-up of our long tradition of local color, now felt to be part of the history of the imagination of a great country. And her feeling for vital passion in any of its forms (passion, she says, is what she seeks in all her stories) gave her power over a theme unique in the nineteenth century, the overflow of vigorous men and women from the old world into new country, after a thousand years of stability. She made personal history of Whitman's "race of races" in its formative century. Her art is not a big art. It does not respond to the troubled sense of American might and magnitude realized but undirected, and felt so strongly by such men as Sinclair Lewis in the same decades. It is national in significance, but not in scope. Her colleagues among the men "sweated sore" over that job, whereas her books rise free and are far more creative than critical. She is preservative, almost antiquarian, content with much space in little room—feminine in this, and in her passionate revelation of the values which conserve the life of the emotions. She knew evil, and suffered from the grossness of materialism and the smugness of cheap success, but preferred to celebrate the vitality of the good. The spiritual energy of our frontier, and passion nobly interpreted were her themes.

HENRY SEIDEL CANBY.

The Third of Two

By Raymond Holden

I

SAD, in the stifling shrillness of a night
Dripping with lush green, bulged the crouching beast,
His dark mind sucking at its eyes for light,
His forehead furrowed, his full belly creased.
With each sharp sound ears shifted, nostrils flared,
The feet and fingers clung, the heavy head
Hung from the shoulders on a slope of haired
Breast, uncomfortable and uncomforted.

Solemn, uncertain, shackled, slow and dumb,
Part of his world but not its whole, he lived
Without a thought of have-been or to-come,
Through many changes and, at last, contrived
To learn that there is more to provender
Than quickened breath beneath one fed beast's fur.

II

Here he is now, hater of accidents,
Raw tastes, rank hues, strong odors, raucous noise,
Incautious action, blood-warmed common sense;
Eager to toy with everything but toys,
Ready to break to its component surds
The expression which once made his speech profuse
And live, by letters shaken from their words,
Within the counter-jungle of the abstruse.

What shall we do who are germane to both,
Having by variation taken on
The attributes of scholar and of sloth,
But learn that sloth and scholar are as one
In their compulsion to obey command—
The sloth to live, the man to understand.

III

Reason, without its flesh, is but a flair,
A garment cloud, torn by the lightest wind
To nothing visibly separate from air.
Flesh, without reason, is an empty rind
Whose function can be only to decay.
Reason and flesh, in union, make a third
That is neither reason's light nor flesh's clay
But both and more than both—God's working word.

Man's appetite for this, his recognized
Pursuit in flesh of spirit's vestiges,
Is love; a greatness in his optic-sized
Appraisal of the universe he sees;
A use of power, not to privilege him,
But for a full cup's perfect power to brim.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"Let the Eagle Scream"

SIR: My belated appreciation for "Let the Eagle Scream" [*SRL* Mar. 15] and its sequels—your editorial of April 5 and Nard Jones's terse seconding of the motion. Mr. Frederick P. W. McDowell's error in criticizing you is his failure to understand that we can only export our "spiritual rationale" as a gratuitous dividend to the purchasers of our motor cars, trucks, and refrigerators you cite. These are not, as he said, just materiél produced from natural resources fortuitously bestowed upon us. Other nations have ores and oils and forests and plains similar to those placed within our boundaries by God or Nature, and they have some resources we lack, besides; but it was American ingenuity, industry, and democracy (for lack of a better word) that utilized the resources to make us great.

Our material wealth, the "devices which minister to man's health and comfort and ease," are sometimes envied us, even in ridicule, and always sought. By their export we might arouse respect and emulation of the politico-social system that produced the material objects without sacrifice of spiritual rationale. But all countries, no matter how poor and backward by our standards in the creature comforts, are fiercely proud of their own spirituality and intellectual standards. A certain Near Eastern prince, after a very swift tour of the United States during which he purchased a shipload of our mechanical aids to what Americans call a normal standard of living, observed upon reaching his Ishmaelitic homeland that the United States was a wonderful, wonderful country but, praise Allah! it was good to be back in civilization. I don't like rice-Christians but they are better neighbors than bandits. Let the eagle scream, indeed, and show its claws a little, too, lest the eagle be made to scram, instead.

WALTER KARIG.

Alexandria, Va.

German Book Hunger

SIR: It would be interesting to hear a definition of "one world" from the various publishers who withdrew from the U. S. International Book Association because of "commercial considerations." An understatement in the Paris *Herald Tribune* of Jan. 11 terms this "a serious blow to American cultural prestige abroad," although it is erroneous to believe that we have much prestige on this score after last summer's wave of troop disorders, the dismally low intellectual knowledge and interests of U. S. military and civilian personnel still in Germany, and the distorted picture of American life that is constantly being given to Europeans by Hollywood films.

Just as one cannot fathom the meaning of war until one has experienced the first bullet or the first V-1 flying overhead, so it is probably impossible for anyone who has not been abroad during or since the war to comprehend the German hunger for books and the desire for reorientation. You do not go out and buy a book in this country; you hunt for one and, generally, it is necessary to exchange one book for another. Magazines, when they appear, are literally fought for by people.

If we are sincere in saying so often that we wish to reeducate the Germans, the words should be implemented with deeds. The opportunity of a lifetime is being wasted. Germany should be flooded with books, pamphlets, and throwaways of every description. Not only Germany, but every country in Europe. The people of this continent need material help, it is true, but they do not regard America merely as a breadbasket. They look to us to lead the world. But apparently the best that we can do is talk, talk, talk.

GOULD CASSEL.

Heidelberg, Germany

"I can't help it if you do like an atmosphere of culture and refinement. Where are we going to sleep?"

Wanted: George Eliot Letters

SIR: With the help of the Guggenheim Foundation I am preparing an edition of George Eliot's letters which is to be published by the Yale University Press. I have had access to all the collections known to contain George Eliot manuscripts, but there are a number of interesting letters listed in old auction catalogues that I have been unable to trace. If the present owners are willing to have them included in the Yale Edition, their cooperation will be gratefully acknowledged. Sometimes an apparently trivial autograph supplies a link of great importance.

GORDON S. HAIGHT.

464 Yale Station,
New Haven, Conn.

Suggestion for Rutherford Platt

SIR: My nomination for the book I couldn't live without, in response to Rutherford Platt's request [*SRL* April 12] would be "Lavengro" by George Borrow, that original man who gave us the gypsies and made real the strange characters of the wide open road. Or would it be "Pickwick Papers" or "Robinson Crusoe" or "The Wisdom of Confucius"? You see, his request is rather impossible to a book lover.

FRANCES S. BEATTY.

San Francisco, Calif.

Any Edward Sheldon Data?

SIR: I have been authorized to assemble material for a biography of the late Edward Sheldon. If any of your readers can provide me with letters, documents, anecdotes, or reminiscences, I would be grateful to them for communicating with me.

All suitable material will be copied and promptly and carefully returned to the owners.

MARION MEIGS HYDE.

The Hill School,
Pottstown, Pennsylvania

Hymns of Hate

SIR: Art is a word I like to see
But what's this thing called "artistry"?

KATHARINE GRACE WADLEIGH.

Toronto, Can.

SIR: A solecism I wish you'd mention
Is that vile phrase "call to attention."

FRANCIS H. ALLEN.

West Roxbury, Mass.

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Seeing Things

BETWEEN THE DARK AND THE DAYLIGHT

IN THEORY it is a charming picture. Every father who has ever read a book, and hopes his children will read one too, has been haunted by it.

The day's work done. Curtains drawn over the darkening windows. Time halted for the happiest of hiatuses. The world shut out. The family close as a unit. The fire roaring. The lamps lighted. The children, fresh from their tubs, their suppers finished, their homework done; the children stretched out on the floor in their dressing gowns, their eyes dancing with wonder. Their mother on the sofa, sewing. Well, if not that, listening contentedly. And father (it would be he), hogging the center of the stage—father at his most *pater familias;* father carrying the torch for culture and continuity; father sitting in the big armchair by the fire, his glasses on, a book spread open in his hands, reading out loud to the entire attentive family.

This is the dream. Every father's dream. But the reality? That's quite a different matter. At least it is in my household. For once, I speak as an authority.

"What about it?" I said to my sons in the late afternoon a few weeks back. By some odd coincidence neither of them happened to be out at a birthday party. It seemed, therefore, like a perfect time for the experiment. You see, it was still cold enough for a fire. Moreover, it was Friday. That meant the older boy had no lessons to do.

"What about our reading a book together?" I suggested, flooded with one of those happy inspirations which intermittently inundate parents "Let's go in the living room and *you* can light a fire." (This "you" was to the younger boy. In truth, it was a low, cheap bribe. It was, however, cheating in a good cause.)

As here recorded in the sweet quiet of print, such an invitation may sound placid enough. But to have that many words heard in my sons' rooms in the late afternoon requires more than conversational stamina. I am afraid bellowing is needed.

My two sons have rooms of their own. Which is all right with them, and me. But each of these adjoining rooms has a radio in it, which they find "neat" and I don't.

They have only recently discovered these radios. They used to get their indoor exercise in other ways than spinning the dials. It humiliates me to remember that once upon a time I, seeing these machines untouched, tried in vain to persuade the boys to listen to them. It's difficult for me to believe, but for months these radios were silent. Now their tubes burn like eternal lights. My boys huddle around them, unwilling and unable to leave them. My hope is, of course, that this is only a phase. My wife and I keep saying to ourselves overexposure to the radio is bound to cure

them. If it doesn't, nothing will cure us.

As addicts of the air-waves, my sons are complete individualists. Their taste in programs is seldom the same. All they share in common is their fondness for noise. Although neither of them is deaf, they both seem to think they are.

They are convinced apparently that a radio cannot be heard unless it is turned on full blast. Strangely enough, each boy is deaf only to the caterwauling of the other's machine. They think nothing of playing Sky King against Superman, Jack Armstrong against Captain Midnight, or opposing Tom Mix to Tennessee Jed. And all of this within fifteen feet of one another. The more thunderous the cacophony, the more abundant their delight.

Trying to speak above these discharging machines is like trying to make oneself heard during a demonstration at a national convention. Yet, hard as it is to hear yourself speak, it is harder still to get the boys' attention when spoken to.

Accordingly, in each of their rooms I had to repeat my suggestion, "What about going into the living room and reading a book together?"

"Why?" asked my younger son, welcoming me with a scowl and with one hand on the dial.

"No," said the older one, adding a "thanks" drowned out by gunshot or a falling airplane, I couldn't tell which.

"But we haven't read together for a long while," I bellowed.

"Sh-h-h, Daddy, p-l-e-a-s-e—it's Superman!"

I ought to have known better. The past two months should have taught me that I was an intruder as unwanted as an atheist at high mass. Every afternoon for weeks the older boy, on his return from school at about 5:10, had made an Olympic dash from the front door to his own room. Every afternoon, with scarcely a word for anyone and without pausing to remove his coat and cap, he had shut himself in, more securely than a condemned man in solitary, to discover what fresh misadventures were overtaking Superman.

Though hoarse, I was persistent. Apologetic, too, much to my surprise, as I pushed my way through a mountain of comics on the floor. "Sorry," I said, "but please come—as a favor."

"Sure, when it's over."

Then I retreated to the younger boy's room.

"Sh-h-h, don't you know you're intawupting Sky King?" he managed to make me hear over an explosion.

"Oh, I didn't really. But don't forget *you* can light the fire."

"O.K., Dad, when it's over."

This gave me some twelve minutes in which to choose a book. Selecting a book that is right both for a boy of six and one of ten; that can survive the ordeal of being read out loud; yes, and that is endurable to the parents no less than to their young is not as easy as it sounds. I turned to my wife for aid. She blanched a little, less at the problem of choosing the book than at the prospect of being read aloud to.

Fairly soon after our marriage I discovered that my wife hates being read to. A book for her is a lonely delight, not a joint pleasure. It isn't that she is eager to do the reading aloud herself. She dislikes that as violently as she objects to hearing another person read. It's simply that she is one of those people—and their name is Kilroy—who feels the printed word should be encountered in print.

Even after dinner, when we are alone and it is an adult book that I am eager to share, her capacity for listening usually stops with the first

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Book & Lyrics by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN, 2d
Directed by ROUBEN MAMOULIAN
Dances by AGNES de MILLE
with Henry Michel, Iva Withers, Connie Baxter, Eric Mattson, John Conte Jean Casto, Jane McGowan
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STATE OF THE UNION
1946 Pulitzer Prize Play
Produced by LELAND HAYWARD
★ New York—Hudson Theatre
★ National Company—Boston, Mass.
★ Transcontinental Company—Philadelphia, Pa.

paragraph. Her gift for pretending to listen comes to a no less abrupt end with the second. Thereafter, if she is not fortunate enough to have been called by a friend to the telephone, a look of despair steals across her face. No victim of claustrophobia could suffer more.

When it comes to reading out loud to the children, my wife's attitude is different. She wants them to be read to; she reads to them herself; but she is just as happy, if not happier, when I do the reading.

"Thank God," said I, "we don't have to read 'Peter Rabbit'."

There does come a time, and very rapidly, when the most loving parent cannot nestle down with any pretense of pleasure to narratives which start, "Once upon a time there was a Pussycat called Ribby, who invited a little dog called Duchess to tea." Or, "Once upon a time there was an old cat, called Mrs. Tabitha Twitchit, who was an anxious parent. She used to lose her kittens continually, and whenever they were lost they were always in mischief!"

"Thank God, too," I continued, "we don't have to read that book about a churchmouse. I think I'd commit hara-kiri if I had to repeat once again that little gem—you know the one I mean. The one the children used to love to have me read because they knew I hated it so—the one that runs:

Snap, whack, bang,
Goes the snap-rat bang,
Goes snap bang,
Goes whack bang,
Fuss, fuss, fuss!

"I don't really think I could face 'Little Black Sambo' and those one-hundred-and-sixty-nine pancakes. Or the Babar books, much as I used to like them. Even 'Uncle Remus' gets me down after the fifth consecutive run-through. No, let's try . . ."

At this moment the older boy came in, trailed by his younger brother. Both of them looked as if they had just taken their places in a tumbril headed for the guillotine.

"O.K., Dad," they said with resignation.

So we moved into the living room and set the stage. The younger boy started the fire with his older brother's aid. My wife took her place on the sofa. The lamps were lighted; the curtains drawn. The boys stretched out on the floor, and I sat in the big chair.

I knew better than to reach for "Hiawatha" or "Evangeline." I had tried them in the past, finding myself in each case in complete sympathy with the revolutions which had broken out by page two.

Somehow I found I was not in an "Ivanhoe" mood. I haven't been for

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more than thirty years. So I excused myself from Gurth and Wamba by deciding that the book which they slowly start was too old both for a six-year-old and for me.

I knew that "Danny Deever" was reliable. It had always proven so in the past. It had brevity to endear it. What is more, a hanging is a dish the young take to without persuasion. I must admit I had been tempted by Lars Porsena of Clusium and his nine gods. But Horatius and his bridgework require vocal energy, and I had little voice or energy left. I would like to have real "Alice," "The Hunting of the Snark," "Stuart Little," or "The White Deer." These, however, were old favorites with the boys.

"Treasure Island" seemed the perfect solution. It had everything—thrills, pirates, a youthful hero, villains, adventure, buried gold, ships, and a siege. It was literature; a classic. If anything could, it would win them away from the comics and the radio and all those supermen flying around in space, wearing long red underwear and transported by magic capes.

After a brief introduction, less eloquent than the prologue to "Henry V" but on the same general idea, I began, "Chapter One. The Old Sea Dog at the 'Admiral Benbow'."

"What kind of a dog is a sea dog?" This, needless to say, came from the six-year-old. Time out for a quick explanation.

"Who is Admiral Benbow?" Another explanation.

"Come on, now, let's get going. It'll all explain itself. Just listen."

I cleared my throat, as people will when beginning a new chapter. "Squire Trelawney, Dr. Livesey, and the rest of these gentlemen," I commenced, "having asked me to write down the whole particulars about Treasure Island. . . ."

Everything seemed to be going beautifully. They liked the brown old seaman, with his tarry pigtail, his scarred hands, and a sabre cut across one cheek. They were delighted—as who would not be?—with his "Fifteen men on the dead man's chest—Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!" They were excited about his warnings against "a seafaring man with one leg." Their growing suspense made me very happy. The dream had become an actuality.

Just then the telephone rang. It was for my wife. She was gone in a flash.

"What's 'Dry Tortugas'?" asked the older boy.

"Uh, uh—well, uh,—" I did not and do not have the foggiest idea. "Oh, it's just one of those things they have on the Spanish Main." That seemed vague enough. Anyway, it worked.

"What's the Spanish Main?" demanded the younger boy.

Again an expository pause, and fortunately one which this time could be filled in.

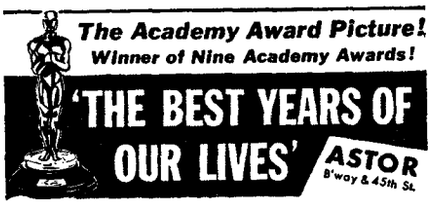
Then I went on, becoming so interested myself that I did not look up until enraged cries of "Stop it!" "Hey, you!" "He took my cap pistol!" "You bum!" compelled me to do so.

"Stop it, boys!" I thundered in my most piratical tones. "I don't care who did what. Give me that pistol. Now you come over here." The younger boy stretched out beside my chair.

With a pistol in my lap but with-

STAGE

SCREEN



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out a cutlass, I returned to "Treasure Island."

Everything except me was blessedly quiet for some time. From the corner of my eye I could not help noticing that the younger boy had bellied his way behind my chair. So long as he was silent, I did not object. "This is it," I said to myself as I read on. "This is it!"

I was nearer the truth than I realized. Suddenly, a spitball caught me right in the back of the neck. What is more, it stung. It was not meant for me. That I happily, even proudly, admit. Its target, however, was beside the point.

"Go to your room," I ordered the little boy, though the punishment hurt me far more than it did him. "That's very rude of you." He left at once, without protest, with an unknown docility.

"Now let us go on," I said to the older boy. "*You* like it, don't you?"

"Yes, it's neat. But, say, Daddy, can't I go too?"

"You? Why?"

"Well, uh—uh—couldn't I—uh—uh—read it to myself?"

"Couldn't you what?"

"Read it to myself? It takes so long this way, Daddy."

"Certainly," I replied, I am afraid with a considerable show of hurt feelings.

"You see," he added, sensing that I needed consolation, "there's something I've just got to finish in my room before The Lone Ranger comes on. You don't mind, do you?"

"Not at all; not—at—all, if that's your choice."

He was kind enough not to run to his room. And kind enough to turn at the door to say, "Thanks, Dad. Thanks a million."

I looked at the drawn curtains. I looked at the lighted lamps. I looked at the roaring fire. I looked at the empty room. Then I picked up "Treasure Island." It remains an excellent book to read to oneself.

But I was glad when dinner was announced. I was lonely.

JOHN MASON BROWN.

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*From a new volume, "Stones from a Glass House," 1946.

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THE WRITER IN THE MIDDLE

THERE has recently been considerable contemplation of a strike by the Radio Writer's Guild. This organization, like the Dramatist's Guild and the Screen Writer's Guild, is included in the Author's League of America, and contains on its roster practically all of the professional radio writers—that is, writers whose principal and permanent source of income is from radio.

The points of conflict between the radio networks and the Guild are beside the point of this article. They concern mainly the fact that a writer is required to forfeit his entire equity in a literary creation with its first sale as a radio script. The network, the advertising agency, or the advertiser, whoever acts as contracting agent, calmly insists on all subsequent rights on the theory that they should be repaid for their efforts in popularizing the material. The author sometimes shares in any further proceeds, but control of the material rests with the purchaser.

The idea that a soap company, for example, is in the business of selling soap rather than of developing theatrical properties seems to escape the negotiators. If advertisers were consistent, they would also demand a share of the subsequent rights of magazine stories in issues carrying their ads. Complete consistency in this odd economic theory would also dictate that playgoers be given a share of the proceeds from a movie sale of a play.

The real difficulty, though, is artistic rather than economic. Radio material, and the people who write it, are not thought of in literary terms by the industry. Radio writers are considered employees, to be called in when it becomes necessary to "make" a radio show, or "prepare" a radio script. By and large, the average radio writer has accepted this attitude toward his craft. He has been painfully aware of the crass use to which his literary efforts have been put, and he has been even more painfully aware of the fact that he does not work with bookmen or men of letters, but with salesmen.

When it comes to creating slogans and putting the merits of a given product into a neat rhyme, no literary skill is required. The author becomes a salesman, and accepts that task happily for the pay it brings. But, in the field of dramatic radio programs the script itself does not sell anything. It gathers to the loud-speakers across the country an audience—preferably a happy audience and a grateful audience. Following the presentation of the event, as in the days of the medicine show, a salesman steps forward, and, while the audience is still in a good mood, exerts his charms to persuade them to buy his product. But the radio script itself does not attempt to sell the product. And therein lies the source of whatever pride a radio writer may have in himself and his works. Unfortunately for him, however, the industry has not yet arrived at the point, long ago reached by publishers, editors, theatrical entrepreneurs, and movie producers, where they realize that without a good script you can never, even with the biggest orchestra, the loudest comedian, and the best technicians, have a show that will take an audience off the ground and hold it. The average advertiser and agency executive have a vast regard for an idea. They will indulge in long conferences to decide whether to present a comedy show, a romance program, or a murder mystery. But once that decision is reached, the creative process is, for all intents and purposes, turned off, and the mechanical process begins.

A writer, preferably one who has had some experience in concocting a show of the type desired, is located, and assigned to the series. At best, the result is a ghost-writing task or a collaboration between the writer who is to spin the dialogue and create the character and the advertising executives who were stirred by the original composition. In most cases the collaboration is reasonably successful, for there are definite patterns to radio programs, and any writer who knows when the chase should start, what sort of device should be used for the denouement, or what sort of understatements the hero should use to endear him to the audience can manufacture a reasonable facsimile of excitement, suspense, or humor.

And who are these craftsmen who have learned how to stir up so plausible a half hour's entertainment that if you don't follow it too carefully, or think about it after you've heard it, it seems almost real? They are the writers who have finally discovered how to make a living in a very trying profession. They are the writers whose first jobs may have paid them from twenty to forty dollars per week in a small radio station. In that job they would have learned all the tricks necessary for telling a story in radio terms. They would have learned about sound effects, audience reactions, and about the customary taboos in this field of entertainment. They would then have come to one of the centers of the industry—New York, Chicago, San Francisco, or Hollywood—and, with reasonable luck and talent, gotten a position as a writer with a network or an advertising agency.

In a network their pay would have been between fifty and seventy-five dollars a week, at first, and their chores would have included writing announcements for musical programs, preparing Sunday afternoon remarks to be fitted between the numbers sung by a choir, and composing announcements urging the conservation of fats or rubber or some such. In an agency their pay would have been about the same, and they would have inherited the chore of writing one-, two-, or three-minute commercial announcements, bridges between musical numbers, and thirty-second jingles.

AFTER a year or so their apprenticeship would be complete. They would have learned all there is to learn about the mechanics of radio writing. They would possibly be earning between sixty and ninety dollars a week, and would represent a modest investment on the part of their employer. The modesty of the investment, though, is only financial. These writers represent all that a network or an advertising agency has to offer except for a few mechanical devices. They are what the dramatist is to drama, the composer is to music, and the sculptor is to sculpture. They are authors in an industry that depends almost entirely upon authorship.

But their way of life can be compared to that of a plumber in a palace. They are required to use the back door. Their wages are the subject of haggling that would shame a fishwife. Their calling is deplored by the very people who make their devices a necessity. And, finally, their employers, in the manner of the politest society, seem ashamed to have them seen on the premises.

The maximum wage which a staff radio writer at a network can hope for is in the neighborhood of one hundred and fifty dollars a week. Writers working on specific commercial programs, of course, command as much as six and seven hundred dollars per program for the indeterminate length of the time their services are favored. As a permanent profession and career, though, radio offers only

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one thing—a springboard by which the lucky ones can leap into motion pictures, magazine writing, or, perhaps, save up enough money to write a novel or a play.

Writers possessing enough gifts to be hired by the networks are not encouraged to develop these gifts. There are simply no rewards to make the tortuous development worth the effort. And even if some writers have other goals than money, they are not allowed to develop their ideas. In all other fields of creative writing, an author is known to be working even when looking out of the window. In radio, though, his day is carefully filled by the requirements on his time so that each minute between nine and five is punctuated by the number of typing sounds that would be appropriate for an accomplished typist. If the programs on which he is working are transferred to another city, or taken off the air, his services are terminated. The alternative, of course, would be to allow him the interim time for developing, draft by draft, new programs. Likewise, when their creative abilities dry up, as they do periodically, rather than being pastured out to recharge their imaginative energies, writers are let go.

The result is that radio writing, the core of the greatest entertainment industry in the world, is never considered a career by either the individual practitioners or by the people who might profit by the development of those careers. The writer finds the rewards too slender, even in comparison with truck driving. There is no security either by labor standards or by reason of accumulated prestige. The only unpredictable matter in the whole situation is whether the demands of radio will completely drain a writer in ten years, or twelve. Only the most hardy lasts fifteen.

By the time the average author is entering his prime, ready to bring to the world the accumulation of his thinking, experience, and learning, the radio writer is written out. Not for just a few months, or even for a year. He is through writing completely, as who would not be, after turning out enough material for two or three hundred full length plays or novels. ALBERT N. WILLIAMS.

MACHINE-AGE ART

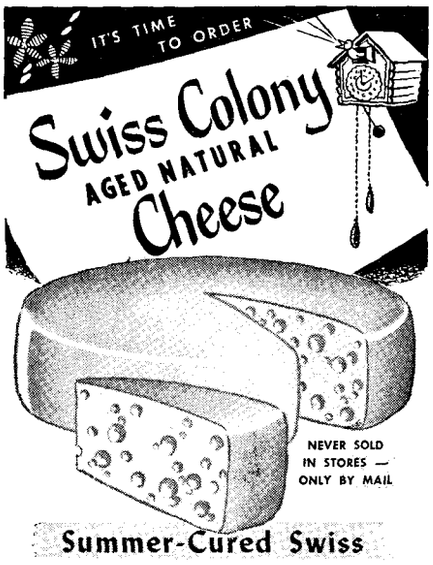
(*Continued from page* 10)

Today's popular art did not come out of yesterday's fine art. It is not a degenerate form of yesterday's fine art, as the esthetes fear it is, nor is it a degeneration of yesterday's folk art. It is something developed out of natural social habits and needs by the machine. It exploits something in the lives of the common people that was there before the machine came but was then of less extent and power.

The substance of popular art is always fiction, and it always has a moral. It is easier, in other words, to change it to satisfy Plato's objections than it would be to meet the criticisms of Aristotle. There will always be difficulties: loose thinking is easier than rigorous thinking. Cheap emotions are easier to arouse than fine ones. Crude attacks on the attention of the general public are the first to succeed even if they do not last. What appeals to many, and appeals easily, is not likely to be delicate or oblique or ironic or reticent. And these are difficulties from Plato's point of view, as well as by the canons of beauty, because they make necessary a dangerous breadth and force and may lead the artist into sacrificing meaning for effect. But the important point is that the objections that Plato might make to a modern example of popular art would be objections that the consumer of that kind of art would understand. I am afraid he would not know what Aristotle was talking about.

We may say in passing that it is not from our ancient canons that we would get any depreciation of these stories on the ground that they were escape. They are escape, of course. That is one of their chief purposes. Escape on any level is a natural and honorable way of living a part of one's life. There may be neurotic escape, just as there may be neurotic effort. But, within healthy limits, it is the quality of the world one escapes into that counts. What the moralists and the philosophers, following Plato, have insisted on is that escape should be into a world of the imagination where the dreamer can get refreshment, pleasure, release, and not only these things which he seeks but also some new understanding even if it be no more than a restored wholesome love of commonplace friends and ordinary things.

It should be quite clear by now that I am not talking about the popularizing of art that is great or fine. However, since we acknowledge that the strictly defined esthetic experiences are possible in greater or less degree to all men, it must be that fine art can be made more popular if the right devices can be found. It would remain something different from popular art, however. The strategy for this pedagogical task may be



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found in studying the popular response to those great ones who are both creators of beauty and friends of the crowd. They mix representation and vicarious moral experience in with patterns of beauty.

Is it possible to mix patterns of beauty into what is offered the crowd as a story? I spoke previously of a bit of Chopin played by Iturbi in the midst of a rather silly tale produced as conventional Hollywood popular art. If we take the long view it might well be that Mr. Iturbi is doing more for wider appreciation of music, music as a fine art, that is, by putting Chopin into this unexpected place, than he would be by giving a concert in Carnegie Hall. The device is to hold and satisfy the customers with the real thing they came for, a story, and then to expose them to music. The reason for the device is that fine art, even in music, is made rather formidable, these days, by the paraphernalia of the appreciators and by the pageantry of its presentation. A great many people do not know whether or not they like good music because they have never really heard any. It is cruel nonsense, of course, to say they do not like it when in fact they have never had a chance. But if they are exposed they can and often do discover quite unsuspected responses in themselves. The whole modern development of good music is a proof of that fact.

What I have been saying can be summed up in this: that we cannot judge popular art as if it were trying to be something else. All parties concerned are basically satisfied to have it judged by its moral lessons. Some of the creators may occasionally retreat into a quite shallow art-for-art's sake defense if they are accused of corrupting the young, but the consumers always know what the game is all about and the creators will boast of their moral influence if they dare. If we must follow either of the main stems of European thought about such matters we can at a respectful distance follow Plato, the moralist:

> Shall we make a law [says the Athenian in "The Laws"] that the poet shall compose nothing contrary to the ideas of the lawful, or just, or beautiful, or good, which are allowed in the state?

Most of the consumers of popular art would answer, "No, not a law. We don't like laws about such things." But they would approve the principle nevertheless, and would enforce it by their patronage. We can develop our canons in good Platonic fashion out of that.

Lyman Bryson, author of "Science and Freedom," is counselor on public affairs for CBS.

NEW EDITIONS

THE story of the Comstock Lode has been told often, but the man who told it first was William Wright, who flourished for thirty-one years, under the pseudonym of Dan De Quille, as an editor of Virginia City's famous newspaper, the *Territorial Enterprise*. Dan's name will ring at least a faint bell in the memories of all those who have read Mark Twain's biography, for it was under De Quille that young Sam Clemens went to work on the *Enterprise* in 1862; and it was in Mark's Hartford house that Dan turned a mass of notes into "The Big Bonanza," which had been commissioned by those new silver millionaires, John Mackay, James Fair, Senator Jones, and William Ralston, and published in 1876. It was listed as out of print in 1912, and it has now been issued in a new edition (5) by Knopf, with an introduction by Oscar Lewis. This occurrence is one to be hailed by all lovers of lively Americana.

De Quille wrote when the mines of the Comstock Lode were booming, when Virginia Consolidated alone was paying out monthly wages of $90,000 and, *nota bene*, monthly dividends of $1,080,000. They were clawing the heart out of the "big bonanza" on the fifteen-hundred-foot level, and men like De Quille could foresee no probable end to the silver reservoir. But Mr. Lewis informs us that California paid its last dividend in 1879, and Consolidated Virginia in 1880, after "these two mines had yielded a profit in excess of $75,000,000."

When De Quille sat down to write his history, he took a generous view of his assignment. The result is a book that is marvellously various and vital; a grab-bag full of all manner of things. The author tells the story of mining in the Washoe area from the days of the first prospectors. He explains mining techniques, from the lowest level to the stamping mill. He takes us into the depths on personally conducted tours. He talks of mine disasters and safety devices. He provides us with many statistics regarding "the richest spot in the world." But while he is doing all this, he is doing much besides. He is telling us tall Western stories of the kind Twain learned to write; discoursing on the Washoe zephyr and the Washoe canary; introducing us to fighters and drunks and numerous odd Virginia City characters; giving us a magnificent description of the panorama to be seen from Mount Davidson; explaining the mountain's geology; discussing some of the more interesting local fauna; writing of Indian troubles, tribes, and traditions; describing a great mine battle; putting in a plug for Lake Tahoe as a resort; holding forth on the dangers of stock speculation; spicing his narrative with humorous sketches of the kind that won him popularity; recalling all phases of the rough and ready Nevada life, which included much brutal practical joking; writing pious sketches of the millionaire proprietors; and capping the whole with a vivid account of Virginia City's great fire of 1875.

One puts down this book with much respect for Dan De Quille's writing ability: he was master of more than one style, and he did one enduring job. When you walk today along Virginia City's sinking sidewalks, you walk among ghosts; but these ghosts all come to vigorous, even violent life in De Quille's pages, and he makes us understand one bit of American history in a way that would be possible to no writer who had not lived that history. With "The Big Bonanza," Knopf's new series of Western Americana, edited by Robert Glass Cleland and Oscar Lewis, gets off to a fine start.

You will find Americana of another kind (1,500 pages and several pounds of it) in "The Saga of Andy Burnett," by Stewart Edward White (Doubleday, $3.50). This large lump of fiction, introduced by Joseph Henry Jackson, includes "The Long Rifle," "Ranchero," "Folded Hills," and "Stampede." . . . Thirty-one of Edna Ferber's short stories, written from 1913 to 1942, have gone into "One Basket" (Simon & Schuster, $3.50), with introductory notes by the author. Fewer of these would seem machine-made today if Miss Ferber had not led the way for many imitators. She says that in her early stories she had the habit of packing in enough material for a novel. The habit remained. . . . Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings's "The Yearling," regarding which no reader's memory should need to be refreshed, is in the Modern Library ($1.10).

Western fans please note: Peter Field's "Guns from Powder Valley" and Eugene Cunningham's "Pistol Passport" (Bantam Books, 25¢ ea.)

BEN RAY REDMAN.

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The New Recordings

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING		PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT
	Recording Technique	*Surface*	
HANDEL-BEECHAM, THE GREAT ELOPEMENT. London Philharmonic, Beecham. Victor M 1093 (3) $3.85	Imported recording. Fine, broad tone, but higher highs are lacking.	A—	(*See below*) Note Victor rightly labels this Handel-Beecham. Characteristic Beecham playing.
BACH, CANTATA #4, CHRIST LAG IN TODESBANDEN. RCA Victor Chorale & Orch. Robert Shaw. Victor M 1096 (4 10") $3.65	Fine job on chorus and orch. Continuo is strange—sometimes organ is heard, sometimes harpsichord, often neither.	A—	Authentic, accurate, not too exciting. Good but monochrome vocalism: more of text—its meaning, rhythm, phrasing—would provide variety and life; more "speaking" quality needed.
FAURE, SICILIENNE. STRAVINSKY, FIREWORKS. Chicago Symphony, Defauw. Victor 11-9447 (1) $1.	One of Victor's best jobs, a nice, soft resonance. Some copies warped.	A—	A fine single—Defauw outdoes himself. Lovely, alive playing, gracefully recorded.

THE GREAT ELOPEMENT

THE Great Elopement" is the latest of the Handel-Beecham scores (1945) and one more in the long series of popular synthetic and arranged suites that began with Harty's "Water Music," still a recorded favorite. The Beecham orchestrations are free from restraint as to authenticity. The only considerations have been the melody and harmony of the original and how to interpret these, given the technique of the existing symphony orchestra.

"The Great Elopement," however, according to my ear, removes decidedly farther from the original than anything before. It is my impression that the earlier Handel arrangements, Harty's included, were essentially authentic as to melody and harmony; they were arranged only in the sense of resetting the music for modern orchestra and filling out the figured bass. But here the very fabric is recast. If some of the jucier harmonies in "The Great Elopement" are Handel's, then there will be considerable hat-eating hereabouts. Numerous phrases seem to have been entirely reharmonized in Sir Thomas's own style—a fine cross between Schubert and Delibes, with a touch of Offenbach. (If you doubt me, listen an inch from the end of side two.) Keys, sections of melody, harmonic progressions have been freely rearranged.

Horrible, some will say. But to this listener, all considerations but plain music aside, "The Great Elopement" is a pleasure in the listening, and not the least of it is the utterly un-Handelian instrumentation, charmingly and consistently Schubert - Delibes - Offenbach and thoroughly musical. This is Beecham, à la Handel. And why not? A good composer, an outstanding musician, should be able with imagination and skill to incorporate another man's basic material into his own, to reinterpret and restyle it without doing violence to its own innate possibilities. Some succeed, others think they do, but the practice has been rife from the beginning of musical time; Handel himself did it without the slightest compunction and with the greatest success. Sir Thomas Beecham has plenty of immediate precedents too in semi-original scores based freely, sometimes very freely on other men's music. Stravinsky's "Pulcinella," based on Pergolesi, his "Baiser de la Fée" on Tchaikovsky; Tchaikovsky's own "Mozartiana" and Respighi's "Rossiniana"; the Mottl-Glück suites and the Tommasini-Scarlatti "Good Humored Ladies"—all these are rewritten with varying degrees of stylistic freedom and musical independence. There are many others, including much ballet music not good enough to stand on its own as concert music, and there are a hundred "Variations-on-a-theme-by . . ." In all such examples and in every transcription the final test must be musical—is the stuff, as it stands, as it sounds, good music, antecedents entirely aside? You'll like "The Great Elopement."

EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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GERMANY'S DANCE OF DEATH

(*Continued from page 15*)

dreds" of docks like the one at Nuremberg.

The argument is familiar: the Western democracies were so obsessed with the Bolshevist bogey that they failed to stop Hitler in his tracks and thus became accomplices by silence in his depredations. It is difficult objectively, however, to see much difference in culpability between the surrender of the West at Munich and the cordial invitation for the Polish invasion contained in the Russo-German non-aggression pact. More than this, it may be recalled to Mr. Bernstein that if the West was forced to compromise with the devil, it at least did not join in league with him. But Mr. Bernstein prefers artfully to dodge the sinister secret annex to this treaty which partitioned Poland, the Baltic States, and Bessarabia, and with startling dexterity demonstrates to his own satisfaction that the pact "actually assured Germany's defeat."

I believe I am justified in calling this a book with a slant. A further indication of its general tilt is Mr. Bernstein's argument that the sins of the Western democracies go back to 1918, when they refused to give the German Revolution a chance, resulting in the creation of "the Weimar Republic instead of a German Soviet." Whether or not one sympathizes with this proclivity, it is a long way from Nuremberg.

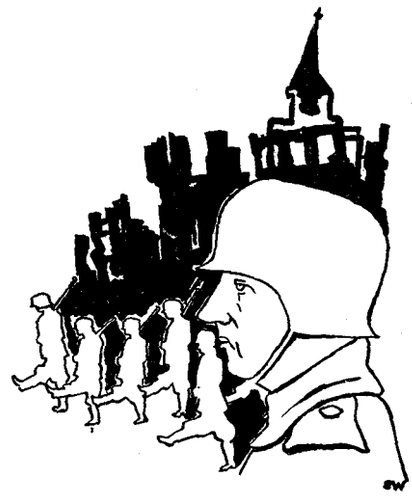
William E. Jackson assisted his father, Supreme Court Justice Robert H. Jackson, at the Nuremberg trials.

3. *World Gangsters*

DESIGN FOR AGGRESSION. By Peter de Mendelssohn. New York: Harper & Bros. 1947. 270 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by SAUL K. PADOVER

THIS is a book on a frightful subject. It is a documented account of how a group of men worked out a detailed conspiracy to conquer the world and slaughter a sizable portion of mankind. The conspirators were not ordinary criminals or common underworld figures. They wore brilliant uniforms and their behavior was "correct" and "diplomatic." They belonged largely to the ruling class, and among them were generals, admirals, bankers, and politicians. For a dozen years these conspirators struck terror into the heart of the world and they caused more blood to be shed and suffering to be endured than probably any other body of men on record. They were, to a man, adventurers, scoundrels, sadists, or plain racketeers who lusted for power and domination at any cost. First they ganged upon the hapless German democracy and choked it to death, and then they set out to organize a devilishly calculated assault upon civilization. In six years they had built up what was perhaps the most formidable murder machine ever known on this tortured earth. What the professional killers did with their engine of destruction, and how they finally met their end, all that is now history.



In "Design for Aggression," Peter de Mendelssohn, a German-born British journalist, has utilized hundreds of captured Nazi documents, which were used in the Nuremberg trials, to trace the conspiracy in some thematic and chronological order. The documents show that the Hitlerites and their allies the generals planned aggressive war from the moment the Nazis seized power in 1933. The book gives many of the inside Nazi military plans, directives, and memoranda. As early as 1934, Schacht, the Nazi economics dictator, in a report to Hitler on the "War-Economic Mobilization" stated casually: "The Reich Ministry of Economy has been charged with the economic preparation for war." In the following year Schacht, in another periodic report to his master, started with the "premise" that the "armament programme is . . . *the* mission of German policy" to which everything must be subordinated. In the spring of 1936, at a Council of Ministers, Goering, who presided, announced: "All measures are to be considered from the standpoint of an assured waging of war." Finally, in the summer of 1937 General von Blomberg drew up the first full "Directive for Unified Preparation for War," which was to be valid, as a strategic blueprint for all armed forces, to September 30, 1938. This is a document of basic importance for the understanding of German military designs.

The Blomberg directive was based on the theory that Germany was in no danger of attack and that it should exploit a "politically favorable opportunity" to strike. It dealt with all military eventualities and was, thus, a most flexible instrument. The following possibilities were envisaged: war in the West (Concentration "Red"), war in the Southeast (Concentration "Green"), armed invasion of Austria (Special Case "Otto"), armed intervention in Spain (Special Case "Richard"), war against Britain, Poland, and Lithuania (Special Case "Extension Red-Green"). After 1937 other military codes were worked out, such as Operation Sea-Lion for the invasion of Britain, Felix and Isabella against Spain, Case Barbarossa against Russia, Case White against Poland, Case Yellow against the Low Countries, Operation Weser Exercise North against Norway, Operation Weser Exercise South against Denmark. Six months before the Nazis invaded Russia, and while they were giving lip-service to the Hitler-Stalin pact, the Fuehrer had elaborated his detailed plan for the attack on the Soviets. On December 18, 1940, Hitler issued Directive No. 21 which said: "The German Armed Forces must be prepared to crush Soviet Russia in a quick campaign before the end of the war against Britain."

"Design for Aggression" is full of important information. Unfortunately, the enormous significance of the subject is not matched by its treatment. the book is regrettably two-dimensional, devoid of analysis, lacking background material, and without the needed grace of narrative. It is hardly more than a list of documents strung together with introductory remarks. The general reader will find it hard going, but to the specialist and the historian it should prove to be a veritable mine, and they ought to be grateful to Mr. de Mendelssohn for the service he has performed.

Saul K. Padover, European OSS field reporter during the war, is a scholar, freelance writer, and contributor to PM.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Browning. 2. Byron. 3. Carey. 4. Carroll. 5. Coleridge. 6. Fitzgerald. 7. Hood. 8. Keats. 9. Kingsley. 10. Kipling. 11. Landor. 12. Lear. 13. Shakespeare. 14. Shelley. 15. Tennyson. 16. Thayer. 17. Watts. 18. Whitman. 19. Whittier. 20. Wordsworth.

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the Phoenix Nest

FIRST BLUEBIRDS

TREMULOUS, tentative, wistful, from singers unseen,
Vague incorporeal music that drifts from the sky,
One moment close-borne, the next a faint echo afar,
Soft furtive orisons sung as by angels astray
From a realm once their own, now a home and a haven denied.

O alien and fugitive voices that herald the Spring,
Defying the snow-drifts of March with promise of June,
O eloquent singers and seekers, I would that the heart
Of mankind now congealed in an ice-grip of hatred and fear
Might be reached by your canticle tender, your message of hope—
That your sky-song prophetic might pierce to humanity's core,
Awaken and thaw it, and set it a-thrill with the faith
That earth's death-in-life winter is ended and now is at hand
A Springtime of brotherhood blessed by the sunshine of Peace.

W. R. BROWNE.

* * *

John F. Sullivan, of 5058 Nickel Avenue, Dearborn, Mich., contributes:

I have been very much intrigued by the remarks in your column (Jan. 18 and Mar. 8) concerning various *explications de texte* of poems by Edwin Arlington Robinson. My interest in Robinson, which has always been great, is heightened at the moment by the fact that I am deep in the process of preparing an M.A. thesis on him. Though I hasten to add that I do not thereby qualify as an authority.

It seems to me, after some fresh reading of "The Whip," that your interpretation of this poem is more plausible than that of Professor Winters, but I am inclined to disagree with both of you on your reading of "brink." And on the meaning of that word, I imagine you will agree, the sense of the whole poem turns.

I agreed with you that a chase on horseback was implied. The phrases "a neck behind" and "the chase" tend to support this explanation, and it offers the least difficulty in accounting for the presence of the whip. Your chronology of the events, supported by the argument that a river can be seen to flow more readily from the bank than from within it, seemed to me probably right.

But I stuck at "brink." For me, and I think for most people, the word connotes the edge of a cliff or precipice, *viewed or considered from the top.* So it would seem to be a most amateurish distortion if it were used in this poem to mean a further shore, viewed from below. But there is available a second, quite legitimate, more figurative meaning—"the brink of death, or hell." It seems to me, then, that Robinson is using it in a double sense here, as the impartial observer (before he knows all the elements of the tragedy) assumes that the husband found *his* way to the "brink" by "plunging" over a real brink, leaving the other two to find *their* way to their own "brink."

Since this word is the only reason for believing that all three actors were in the water, I cannot agree that anyone but the husband was necessarily in the river. The "confusion" in the poem, I believe, comes from a failure to realize that there are two time sequences in the poem—the order in which events happened and the order in which the observer comes to know about them.

As for "En Passant," there is perhaps material for any interpretation the reader wants to put on it, though I favor Mr. Walbridge's. I might point out, however, the title's implication of a move in chess, with which you are no doubt familiar, though there has been no mention of it in the published discussions.

* * *

From Joseph Lewis, of Purdys, N. Y., comes the following:

For a number of years the Sunday *New York Herald Tribune* has printed on its Editorial and Letters from the People pages the following quotation attributed to Voltaire, presumably in a letter to Helvetius: "I disapprove of what you say but will defend to the death your right to say it." I cannot find in "Voltaire's Complete Works" this statement.

Recently, *The New York Times* quoted it in an editorial, and I wrote and said that this quotation was lifted out of a biography on Voltaire written several years ago (1919) by S. G. Tallentyre, in which the author stated that the quotation referred to was a "typical Voltaire-an principle." It now seems that "Bartlett's Familiar Quotations" cites this remark as having been mentioned in a letter from Voltaire to Madame du Deffand.

I have made a very careful study of Voltaire's works and the nearest statement I can find to that sentiment is this expression: "Think for yourself, and let others enjoy the privilege to do so, too." Not satisfied with my own research in this matter, I called the New York Public Library, which substantiates my contention that the disputed quotation is not found in Voltaire's works. While this statement has gained wide currency, I think a thorough investigation should be made and its truth determined once and for all.

I believe that the readers of your page would be extremely interested in helping us to make a determination of this quotation.

* * *

ASSUMPTION

I had a daunting dream the other night.
Eternity, that ring of endless light
Vaughan-dubbed, I saw, and thought, "It's very vague! 'll
It be made clearer, do you think, by Hegel?

For I'd been reading books profound and deep
Before I wearily dropped off to sleep. . . .
I saw a band of toilers reach the height
Where everything at last was calm and bright.

And then a Presence that I thought I saw
Filled me with sudden overpowering awe. . . .
But all the band began to set up chairs
And stand on them—to lead in hymns or prayers?

Not so! To state the strict determinism
That lifted them at last from the abysm
Of Earth below. It seemed there was no doubt
That all along they knew it would work out

Exactly as it had. I could not follow
Their arguments resounding high and hollow.
I felt the Holy Ghost a living presence. . . .
But what in—time—is dialectic essence?

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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(Continued from page 37)

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SUMMER CRUISE to Caribbean isles planned by young importer. Interested? Write Louis Nowicki, Lake Mohegan, N. Y.

ADVENTUROUS GIRL desires lively correspondence interesting gentlemen, interests: music, theatre. Box 602-T.

HEALTHY COLLEGE SOPHOMORE wants ranch or camp summer job. Three summers in west; good camper, rider, swimmer, driver, musical. Box 603-T.

BOOK STORE FOR SALE. Manhattan; excellent location; select, growing business; reasonable investment. Answer Box 604-T.

SINGLE MAN, 37, Veteran, psychology teacher, desires correspondence with interesting professional misses. Reply assured. Box 605-T.

PERSONALS

ATTRACTIVE SMALL FURNISHED CABIN for one, private Vermont estate, available to woman of refinement. $40 a month. Box 606-T.

INTERESTED IN YOUR HEALTH, diet, longevity? Send for free list of books. Box 393-T.

LADY, COMMERCIAL TEACHER seeks summer employment; plays piano, violin, anything considered. Box 476-T.

BOOKSTORE—WESTCHESTER SUBURBAN—11 years established—$25,000 gross sales—15% return over operating cost for last three years. Sale immediate, including present inventory, $10,000. Box 494-T.

FOR SALE: 7-room saltbox in dear little village. 5 acres level land, good barn, telephone, electric pump. $2800.00 takes it. David Barrett, Claremont, New Hampshire.

PECAN MEATS FOR SALE. Freshly shelled from select, improved paper shell pecans, toasted in cocoanut oil, slightly salted. Rich in vitamins, minerals and protein. A delight for yourself and friends! Fine for gifts and parties! Packed in 1-lb. gift boxes, cellophane-wrapped. 1-lb. post-paid in U. S., $2.00. 5 lbs. or more, express collect $1.75 per lb. Prompt shipment. Satisfaction guaranteed. Dixie Paper Shell Pecan Exchange, Inc., Box D, Barnesville, Ga.

WILL SINCERE fun-loving lass correspond with lackadaisical college freshman? Box 119-T.

WHY NOT ENJOY A SPRING HOLIDAY at the Yankee Clipper? Right on the ocean in picturesque Rockport, Mass., an artist's and nature lover's paradise. Spring rates in effect until June 15. 127 Granite Street, Rockport, Mass. Tel. 507.

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 685

Reg. U. S. Patent Office

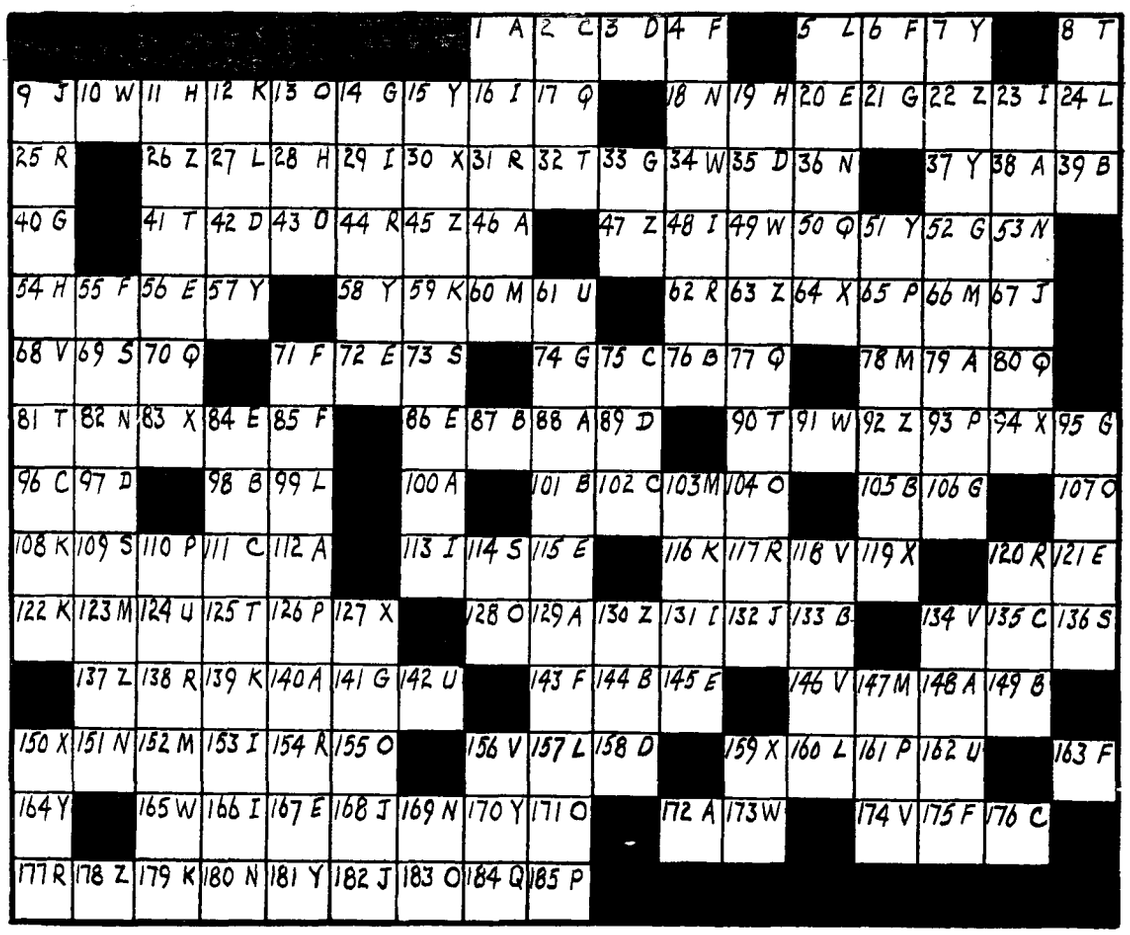
By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Polish composer (1883-1937).	140 148 46 129 100 79 172 1 112 88 38
B. Russian poet (1783-1852; author of national anthem, "God Save the Czar").	149 144 98 76 105 101 133 39 87
C. Pedantic; affectedly learned.	75 135 111 2 102 176 96
D. American Revolutionary officer, at Trenton and later in the South.	97 42 3 89 35 158
E. American polar explorer (1880-).	145 86 84 167 20 121 115 56 72
F. A ringing or other sensation of noise purely subjective (Med.).	143 163 4 6 55 71 175 85
G. Childish.	95 141 106 21 52 14 33 74 40
H. American painter of the Midwest, often called America's "painter of the soil" (1892-1942).	54 11 19 28
I. Beneath one's dignity (Colloq.; Latin; 2 wds.).	48 166 113 16 23 153 29 131
J. Successor to Marshall as Chief Justice of U. S. Supreme Court.	168 182 9 132 67
K. Flagrant; giving great offense.	108 139 59 122 179 12 116
L. Prying; sneaking (Colloq.).	157 27 160 5 99 24
M. A brilliant composition in free fantasia style (Music).	60 78 66 123 147 103 152
N. Goes back on a promise; breaks one's word (Colloq.).	180 169 18 151 53 82 36
O. Detained in port; segregated and detained.	128 183 107 104 155 13 43 171
P. Hurtful; harmful.	110 185 161 93 65 126
Q. American stage designer and architect (1893-).	50 77 70 184 80 17
R. Applied to glands, esp. of hair and face, which secrete fatty matter (Physiol.).	177 154 62 31 120 44 138 117 25
S. Queen of Thebes turned into a nightingale by Zeus (Gr. Myth.).	109 73 136 114 69
T. U. S. taffy in which cream is often substituted for butter.	32 90 41 81 8 125
U. Draw or pull, as oxen a wagon, in S. Africa.	142 124 61 162
V. The color mahogany.	134 118 68 146 174 156
W. American poet, essayist, biographer; Pulitzer Prize, 1936 (1892-).	10 34 91 173 165 49
X. Northern constellation between Corona Borealis and Lyra (Astron.).	119 127 94 30 64 150 83 159
Y. Queen of Henry VII and mother of Henry VIII of England.	7 37 51 181 170 58 15 164 57
Z. Flowers immortalized in a poem by Wordsworth.	137 130 92 178 63 22 26 45 47

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 29 of this issue.

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Who—or what—is

WOUK?

FIRST of all you should know that his name is pronounced "woke." It is a point worth clearing up, because it is a name you will be hearing and using often.

By education and natural bent he is a philosopher and a scholar. By profession he is a radio gag writer.

He has written a novel, AURORA DAWN, which sounds as if it might have been penned with an ostrich quill in a peaceful sidewalk cafe. But it was begun on a U. S. destroyer in the South Pacific during the war, while the author was a Navy Lieutenant.

It is his first novel. But he writes as if he has been polishing off novels all his life and getting better at it all the time.

He has some rather serious things to say. But he refuses to be deadly serious in saying them.

His story of the dramatic deadlock between a backwoods radio evangelist and a tyrannical soap tycoon — and his counterplot involving a young radio executive and two beautiful young ladies—are both as Twentieth-Century as radar. But he has sharpened their contemporary flavor in a curious and unexpected way: by roguishly assuming the mantle of the mock-heroic romancer of the Eighteenth Century.

In short, HERMAN WOUK is a highly paradoxical new American writer, and (it is our passionate belief) as brilliant as he is paradoxical. The pure delight his style affords can only be suggested by samples of it; so you are invited to help yourself.

FREE SAMPLES OF WOUK

PAGE 10. *On Carol Marquis*

Her body was shaped according to the Providential design for young ladies' bodies, and was most pleasing to the view of Andrew, whose eyes deviated little from the Providential design for young men's eyes.

PAGE 53. *On Laura Beaton's Charms*

She was painfully fair to look upon. She was a taunt to man, a reproach to woman. Faithful husbands felt a stir of mild grief as, against their will, they compared her to their spouses and knew that Fate had caged them forever in gray little traps. The flames of ardent lovers flickered and guttered as though the wind of truth had suddenly blown a gust into their overheated imaginations, and an odious little voice warned them that their rosy Celias were, after all, but so many muddy-complexioned, lumpy wives-to-be. Young bachelors fumed; old bachelors mourned. Not a woman within range but felt her presence as an indignity and took revenge in a patronizing analysis of her lure.

PAGE 86. *Some Valuable Advice*

Sweet friends, may Heaven preserve you from error and keep you safe in the good paths of life; but if you are fated to stray, in order to learn the bitter lessons of straying, may one of your sins be a hansom cab ride through Central Park in a snowstorm, wrapped in the arms of a young creature who is not yours.

PAGE 138. *On Preparations for Laura's Marriage*

The day is named, Friday. The elaborate clockwork has come to life, dancing the gay jig that ensues in our community upon the utterance of the magic word "Wedding." The printing press sighs and groans in stamping out the announcement as though it were a disapproving cousin; the disapproving cousins spread the news as though they were printing presses; the dressmakers descend, hard of eye and quick of tongue, to sell the virgin more dresses than she has ever owned, in honor of the occasion of her casting the charms of dress aside; the pastrycook, proportioning the number of layers in the cake to the number of digits in the bridegroom's fortune, is at work on a terraced pyramid bearing an unfortunate resemblance to Purgatory . . .

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